

SHALOM OUR COUNTRY: A VISION FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF EAST AFRICA

A Professional Project
Presented to
the Faculty of the
School of Theology at Claremont

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

by
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May 1991

This professional project, completed by

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fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of*

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

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ABSTRACT

Shalom Our Country: A Vision for the Presbyterian Church of East Africa

by

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The Presbyterian Church of East Africa is distinguished for its vision of evangelical, educational, medical and industrial pursuits. This project analyzes and evaluates the Presbyterian vision in Kenya, using as primary tools historical, educational and ethical disciplines. An examination in Chapter 1 of the problem and its significance leads to inferences about the role of the Church in the modern society of Kenya: to re-establish community cohesiveness and social and ecological justice by educating society and participating more fully in the process of shalom (wholeness) in society.

The Scottish Presbyterian mission to East Africa was, "mindful of the needs of Church of Scotland members in East Africa," but not of the culture and ecology of the indigenous African peoples. The result was a growth of modern individualism, overpopulation, nepotism, corruption, greed and exploitation of both the community and creation. The human, political, economic and social questions facing the Church today point to a vision of shalom for the healing

of the land. While chapter 1 introduces the issues, chapter 2 examines biblio-historical Presbyterianism for its healing and liberating philosophical foundations. Chapter 3 explores the missionary establishment of the Presbyterian Church in Kenya, briefly discussing its impact and growth in the country.

Chapter 4 is devoted to the conflicts between missionary education and African traditional education. Chapter 5 deals with the increased cultural conflicts and the peculiar missionary understanding of African culture. Chapter 6 examines the role of the Church in female circumcision and forced labor. It suggests ecofeminism as a holistic solution for the feminine and creation wellbeing.

Chapter 7 considers the contribution of the Church in political leadership and the freedom of Kenya. Chapter 8 suggests a biblical theology of usalama (well-being) for the healing, restoration, wholeness and sufficiency of the community and the creation. The conclusion (Chapter 9) suggests the importance of a leadership vision that values, teaches, preaches and practices the usalama lifestyle for harmonious communal-ecological intactness.

Acknowledgements

Project writing often feels like a lonely process, especially when my wife, our children and I are all students. But I owe much to Mary Elizabeth Moore and Cornish Rogers who have contributed ideas, insights and stimulation throughout the writing of the project. Special thanks are due to Elaine Walker whose encouragement, criticism, challenges, demands and insightful comments all helped to produce a much better final product.

I owe much to Peter Mwiti Rukungah and Aloysious Ogbonnaya who provided friendship, colleagueship, ideas and questions. Susan Knight edited parts of the project and provided innumerable insights regarding the use of English as a fourth language. Finally, I would like to thank Kathy Deskin for her masterful job of typing and organizing this project.

Families always bear some of the burden of writing. Mwenda, Muriithi, Nyaga and Njagi have been very tolerant of their father even when he was not available to help with school work, play with them or take them out for a picnic. I am most appreciative.

My wife, Alice, supported me through the many trials of schooling, writing and financial strains. I dedicate this project to her and to our children as one small way of showing my love and gratitude to them.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Problem and its Importance

The problem addressed by the project is the weak vision of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa. The importance of the problem in the life and work of the Church is the challenge to maintain an up-to-date, reflective, responsible, prophetic, and just vision for the well-being of the community and the ecology in Kenya.

What is the church teaching about a healthy community living in a wholesome environment? How does Presbyterianism liberate congregations from social injustices and ecological disasters? Is the church re-focusing and re-thinking about educating congregations on how to increase conditions of justice and Shalom in the society? What does the Bible teach about Shalom? Do church leaders in Kenya operate within a vision of Shalom? While the church in Kenya may be addressing the total liberation of humanity, the church has forgotten the agape (love) vision of shalom (wholeness) for a healthy community in a healthy ecology.

The country has more recently been fraught with

turmoil.¹ An explosion in population, falling prices for coffee and tea, and rising ethnic tensions portend greater problems in the future.² Polygamy, though still common, is declining.³ Urbanization and the introduction of Western cultural values has changed the whole African family and community cohesiveness. Ninety percent of the Kenyan population resides in rural areas.⁴ A need exists for a vision of sufficiency, healing, restoration, welfare, peace, love, unity and welfare in the family, community, Church and Kenya Country. Where is Kenya located?

Kenya is situated across the equator, extending to latitude 4° South. It is bounded on the East by the Indian Ocean and extends to Lake Victoria on the West. The total area of 582,646 Km² of inland water.

Kenya is divided into four physical regions--the narrow coastal plain, the semi-arid region of the East and North, the Highlands including the Rift Valley, and the plateau are the most important agriculturally and the most densely populated. About 66 percent of Kenya has an average rainfall of under 50 cm a year and only 13 percent of the country can expect to receive consistently 60 or more centimeters of rainfall a

¹ Mission Yearbook (Louisville: Presbyterian Church USA, 1991), 252.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., 16.

year. These better-watered areas are limited to the south-western part and the south-eastern Coastal belt.⁵

Kenya is a tropical country where some nomads do overgrazing while the majority of rural populations gather wood for fuel and turn useful land into desert. These difficult conditions are caused by modern poverty which in turn undermines the hope for human beings. "Poverty can be likened to a condition which weakens the body, destroying resistance to diseases over which a healthy body might prevail. It deprives peoples and nations of their dignity, integrity and the capacity to take the safeguards against adverse conditions, natural or otherwise, even when they are predictable...."⁶ The economy of Kenya must be "developed and made healthy to strengthen resistance to the ravages of nature and other crises."⁷

The vision will enable the Presbyterian Church of East Africa to change its limited vision and its consequent inability to teach, preach and practice Christian values against poverty, social injustice, greed, corruption, inefficiency, and degradation of the environment. The

⁵ The Kenya Fertility Survey 1978: A Summary of Findings, World Fertility Survey, no. 26 (London: International Statistical Inst., 1978).

⁶ Mission Yearbook (New York: Presbyterian Church USA, 1986), 287.

⁷ Ibid.

Church has a huge appetite for Christian fellowships and encourages planting of new Churches but often produces disappointing results of individualism, personal salvation and self-righteousness. Thus, the majority of Church members are frequently more dissatisfied, discontented and apathetic than committed. The society is eagerly looking upon the church to find "whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable--if anything is excellent or praiseworthy" (Phil. 4:8 NIV).

The rationale for the project is the desire to promote the common good for the whole of creation. The Church needs to sharpen her vision as she serves a pluralistic society clearly marked by diversity and unity,⁶ socialism and capitalism, progress and poverty, tradition and change. The societal values are rapidly eroding away due to modern greed, looting and squandering of the resources of the human and natural resources.

The society is hurting, wounded and broken due to what Ali Mazrui describes as an attempt to modernize without consulting cultural continuities.⁷ The African ancestors lived in harmonious relationships with their fellow human

⁶ Daniel Arap Moi, Kenya African Nationalism: Nyayo Philosophy and Principles (1986; reprint, London: MacMillan, 1987), 24.

⁷ Ali A. Mazrui, The Africans (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1986), 11.

beings and creation. Things have now so changed that the prediction of Chinua Achebe of West Africa is almost fulfilled:

Warriors will fight scribes for the control of your institutions; wild bush will conquer your roads and pathways; your land will yield less and less while your offspring multiply; your homes will leak from the floods and your soil will crack from the droughts; your sons will refuse to pick up the hoe and prefer to wander in the wilds; you shall learn ways of cheating and you will poison the cola nuts you serve your own friends. Yes, things will fall apart.¹⁰

Ali Mazrui admonishes the Africans to change their own changeability for people will not look forward to posterity who never looked backward to their ancestors.¹¹ Mazrui does not tell us who the ancestors are. James Macdonald,¹² a minister, refers to ancestors as old ghosts which are worshiped by Africans even though they are not of much account. Africans do not worship ancestors but revere ancestral wisdom, such as that found in Kenya's harambee-nyayoism. Kenya is built on the pillars of ancestral Harambee-Nyayoism, which means working together for the common good in peace, love and unity. Yet these values are

¹⁰ Chinua Achebe, Things Fall Apart (1958; reprint, New York: Astor-Honor, 1961), as quoted in Mazrui, 11.

¹¹ Mazrui, 11.

¹² James Macdonald, Religion and Myth (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1892), 36.

not enough without justice, mercy and humility. The prophet Micah has this to say:

He has showed you, O man, what is good.
And what does the LORD require of you?
To act justly and to love mercy and to
walk humbly with your God. (Mic. 6:8 NIV)

What is commonly good is the ability to show justice, love, mercy and humility to the whole of God's creation.

What is good is being able to see the "common good" which God saw in creation. After God created the dry land earth and the waters, "God saw that it was good" (Gen. 1:10b). On the land, there grew grass, flowers and trees that bore fruits and "God saw that it was good" (Gen. 1:12b). Then God made the stars to divide light from the darkness and "God saw that it was good" (Gen. 1:18b). And God created the whales, and every living creature, including the winged fowls, "and God saw that it was good" (Gen. 21b). Then God made all the beasts, the cattle and everything that creeps on the ground, "and God saw that it was good" (Gen. 1:25b). The author of Genesis, chapter 1 concludes, "God saw all that he had made, and it was very good" (v. 31b NIV).

The concept of the common good is drawn from God's "very good" which has its philosophical foundations in the essence of God the creator. It seems to me the concept of "good" is derived from the concept of "God," who is good to

me, to you and to the whole of creation. After God created everything, God was happy with the creation. Human happiness also derives from God's happiness.

John Stuart Mill argued that "happiness is desired as an end by everyone."¹³ Stuart's view suggests that happiness is intrinsically good and ought to be promoted in order to maximize net happiness. Morally, everything human beings do has consequences, some promoting happiness (or pleasure) and others reducing happiness. Although happiness is a good end to be desired, it may not be morally valid to execute it.¹⁴

Since human beings can and do err, their idea of happiness may be mistaken. If a school will get happiness from rioting, it may be worth asking if this kind of rioting is desirable while it is going to be met by disgusting, degrading, cruel and cold-blooded terror from the police. Would the students have promoted happiness for the common good if they considered other alternatives to channel their grievances in order to promote their happiness? If a land is becoming a desert due to overgrazing by a nomadic society that lives precisely on meat, milk and blood, is it not a

¹³ Clark Kucheman, class notes and handout, Religion 144, "Capitalism, Socialism, and Justice," Claremont McKenna College, September 1988.

¹⁴ Ibid.

matter of common sense to stop overgrazing and seek for alternative ways of maximizing their happiness in the pursuit of the common good?

However, happiness for the common good depends on one's definition of the Creator's good. For some people God is the content of our ultimate concern, i.e., whatever we affirm to be ultimate or absolute.¹⁵ This definition tends to elevate finite realities to the rank of ultimacy. A more significant concept of God is what should be the content of our ultimate concern, i.e., what truly is ultimate (or absolute).¹⁶

The Meru who form the local community of the writer believe that God of all creation is the vital power of life (called Mulungu in Meru Language). The Meru also describe God as Mwene which means "Owner." In colloquial usage, the Meru will address Mulungu as Mwene Nyaga, meaning the owner of Mount Kenya. They will also refer to a virgin woman as Mwari wa Mwene, meaning a woman owned by God or a woman who has never been sexually abused. The Meru will proverbially and occasionally consider God as Kini Kiilu, meaning one who speaks the final word. Some portions of Meru such as the Mwimbi, Muthambi, Chuka, and Tharaka use the word Ngai for

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

God, meaning the Sharer. God is the good one who fairly shares everything for the common good of the whole of creation.

Humanity has to learn from Ngai so that those who have more food, harmony, peace, stability, knowledge, science, technology, flocks and land cannot be arrogant and mean but humbly learn that it was given to them not for selfish gain but for free sharing.

When a Meru talks of the pursuit of happiness in creation, the Meru refer to God, the one who distributes all happiness and true pleasure throughout the creation. Since human beings disrupt, violate and abuse God's distribution of happiness, they have to be reminded by the iroria (prophets) that the God of justice is the overlord of society, the final authority in all matters, and the final point of reference and appeal.¹⁷

God, in most African communities is honored for justice. God is not what some foreigners have described as concerned "only with his own happiness," "My will be done" or "a very confused and obscure" idea.¹⁸ God loves justice (haki in Swahili) and God's justice remains unquestionable.

¹⁷ Kofi Asare Opoku, West Africa Traditional Religion (Accra: FEP International, 1978), 153.

¹⁸ Bolazi Idowu, African Traditional Religion (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1973), 140-41.

Instead of questioning God, the Africans concentrate on human relationships.¹⁹ Gwinyai Muzorewa states:

Africans recognize life as life-in-community. We can truly know ourselves if we remain true to our community, past and present. The concept of individual success or failure is secondary. The ethnic group, the village, the locality, are crucial in one's estimation of oneself. Our nature as being-in-relation is a two-way relation: with God and with our fellow human beings.²⁰

The African relationships are personal and cannot be expressed in Descartes's philosophy of "I think, therefore I am" or Albert Camu's philosophy "I rebel-therefore we exist."²¹ The African relationships are expressed in John Mbiti's philosophy of "I am, because we are and since we are, therefore I am."²² This view amplifies the primacy of Martin Buber's I-Thou²³ relationships that tend to be personal. By distinction, the separation of I from Thou

¹⁹ Monica Wilson, Religion and the Transformation of Society: A Study in Social Change in Africa (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 137.

²⁰ Gwinyai Muzorewa, The Origins and Development of African Theology (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1985), 17.

²¹ Muzorewa, 18.

²² John Mbiti, African Religions and Philosophy (New York: Praeger, 1969), 141.

²³ Alexander S. Kohanski, Analytical Interpretation of Martin Buber's I and Thou (Woodbury, N.Y.: Baron's Educational Series, [1975]), 56.

forms the I-It²⁴ relationships that are rather impersonal. The living interaction of relationships in Africa are very important for the promotion of harmony, peace, love and integrity of the society.

The relationships of the Meru are based on their understanding of God. The Meru have different names for each person, family and clan. But the bottom line is that Meru are just one people. The Meru understand God to have many names. But the many names refer to the one God, and the one God has many names.

The traditional Meru were intimately related to God rather than to religion. They had names for God but not a single name or word for religion. Their ethics of right and wrong, values and beliefs, rituals and ceremonies were based on Mulungu not religion. God is existentially experienced all of the time and everywhere and not as a theoretical religious system. God is so overwhelmingly present that the so-called religious and secular are within each other rather than separated.²⁵ God gives glory and integrity to every community, space, realm and aspect of creation.

As a community, the traditional Meru, and other Africans maintained the integrity of creation. Parrinder's

²⁴ Ibid., 60.

²⁵ Kucheman.

view is incorrect.²⁶ The creation not only was sacred in the shrines but everywhere because God was everywhere.

The professional leadership of the Church ought to capture this African vision for the healing and restoration of the society and the whole of creation. Since the Church is the light of the world (Matt. 5:14 KJV), its devotion to and advocacy of the common good, justice, peace and love are important. In accordance with the Practice and Procedure,²⁷ the PCEA is not only entrusted with a mission of preaching the gospel for the salvation of souls only

but also to their bodies and minds, and following the example of its master, who went about doing good, it claims the right, as it shall see fit, to undertake educational, medical or charitable work for the benefit of all who desire its help; and declares its willingness to co-operate with governmental and other agencies in promoting the mental, physical and moral welfare of the whole community.²⁸

The Church has continued to go about doing good since 1981. PCEA was began at Kibwezi among the peoples of Kamba and Maasai under the name of The East African Scottish

²⁶ E. G. Parrinder, African Traditional Religion (London: Hutchinson University, 1954), 38.

²⁷ Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Practice and Procedure (Kikuyu, Kenya: PCEA, 1969), 3.

²⁸ Ibid.

Mission.²⁹ The mission had its own agenda, goals and objectives, other than the well-being of the community and their cultural environment. The American Presbyterians have rightfully described the mission as:

directed towards religious, educational, medical and industrial development. True to that mandate, the first missionary party consisted of just one evangelist plus a carpenter, an engineer, and a storekeeper. That philosophy continues in the Presbyterian Church in Kenya today, which considers itself a partner with the government in the development of the country. The Church believes very strongly in Kenyatta's concept of "harambee," the people working together for the common good.³⁰

The PCEA Church was chartered in 1943 and convened its first General Assembly in 1956. It has more than one million members in 22 Presbyteries with congregations in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda.³¹ Its vision is blunt and has not included the integrity of the community and creation.

The church operates in a situation where grave ecological dangers are being posed by soil erosion, depletion of forests and bushes due to overgrazing of goats, sheep, and cattle. Firewood is the only source of fuel for many communities. A need prevails for the Church to help

²⁹ Mission Yearbook (New York: Presbyterian Church USA, 1987), 1.

³⁰ Ibid., 305.

³¹ Mission Yearbook (Louisville: Presbyterian Church USA, 1990), 257.

prevent desertification by a practical demonstration and education based on a theological and ecological vision.

[T]he most staggering expression of the vision is that all persons are children of a single family, members of a single tribe, heirs of a single hope, and bearers of a single destiny, namely, the care and management of all God's creation.³²

The church needs a shalom-guided vision that brings harmony, justice and salvation for the whole of creation and the whole of society.³³ Brueggemann suggests that shalom is a Judeo-Christian vision of one community embracing all creation and living out of the joyous, harmonious memories towards greater anticipations.³⁴ The term is holistic and its meaning is very well expressed by Ezekiel.

And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will send down the showers in their season; they shall be showers of blessing. And the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield its increase, and they shall be secure in their land....They shall no more be a prey to the nations, nor shall the beasts of the land devour them; they shall dwell securely, and none shall make them afraid. And I will provide for them plantations of shalom. (Ezek. 34:25-29a LB)

Shalom, here, is deliberately corporate--the power and the security of the community. The African past and

³² Walter Brueggemann, Living Toward a Vision (New York: United Church Press, 1976), 15.

³³ Brueggemann, Living, 16.

³⁴ Ibid.

contemporary experience witnesses to corporate sharing, caring, dancing and rejoicing.

The communal philosophy in Africa is so strong that a Kikuyu proverb states "Kamwingi kovaga ndiri" (Community lifts heavy loads) or "Kaara kamwe gatiuragaga ndaa" (One finger cannot kill a louse). A West African proverb states:

"Life is when you are together, alone you are an animal." Thus, it is only when an individual is in relation with others--in his family, his clan and society--that he is a full, living human being: otherwise he is less than a man, an animal. Society, then, is a series of interrelationships in which each one contributes to the welfare and stability of the community, and avoids that which is disruptive to the community's life.³⁵

The social modern changes have produced individualism that adulterated and altered the communal cohesiveness.³⁶ The missionaries stressed the responsibility of the individual. A man or a woman must choose life or death, good or evil for oneself.³⁷ The missionaries followed the teachings of such people as John Wesley, who desired their converts to grow in diligence and frugality in order to increase goods. Christianity and idleness were not

³⁵ Opoku, 161-62.

³⁶ Aylwaed Shorter, African Christian Theology: Adaptation or Incarnation? (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1977), 11.

³⁷ Wilson, 93.

compatible.³⁸ Thus, mission work produced a spirit of individualistic self-denial for personal salvation and a distinction from the rest of the society. Unfortunately, it eroded the African communal cohesiveness and the African ecology.

Thesis

The thesis of this project, therefore, is that the Presbyterian Church of East Africa needs a compelling vision of shalom for the restoration of the essence of the community and the integrity of the creation.

Definition of Major Terms

The project will use terms that may well be defined at this stage.

Church. The word Church refers here to the community of faith, particularly the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA). In some sections the term is used to refer to specific bodies of the church--to the parish or to all the denominations and Christian communities in Kenya.

Mission. The word mission will be applied to a vision of shalom and development of that vision among the communities of Kenya. The vision must include the poor and the weak within their respective environments. The Church's mission is all about shalom--everything which God sends his

³⁸ Ibid., 93-94.

people into the world to do, including evangelism and social responsibility, the authentic expressions of the love which longs to serve humanity in their need.³⁹

Education. The project views education as the loving communication of shalom--sharing love, knowledge, justice and culture with one another as part of the transformation of persons, families and the community heritage.

Harambee. A Swahili word used in the project to indicate a religious, social, economic and political coming together to work for the common good. Harambee is a pragmatic communal solution to the individual, institutional and societal needs. Moi describes harambee as follows:

People called out, "Harambee! Eeh!" before they pulled a cow out of a pit, put a roof on a granary, or pushed a fallen tree from the road... in every tribe and culture we have the local version of the Swahili, "Harambee."⁴⁰

The concept of Harambee is indigenous to Kenya and comparable to the less indigenous concepts of Ujamaa (socialism) in Tanzania and Christian humanism in Zambia. Harambee is an essential principle of African socialism which is demonstrated by tactical relationships of love, and

³⁹ John Stott, Christian Mission in the Modern World (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1979), 35.

⁴⁰ Moi, 19.

unity in an atmosphere of peace.⁴¹

Nyayoism. The term Nyayoism is derived from a Swahili word, nyayo, which literally means footprints or footmarks. Nyayoism may be interpreted to mean "walking in" or "following in" the direction of a leader, a movement, a philosophy, a policy or a party. The authorities in Kenya interpret Nyayoism to mean following the ancestral communal good of peace, love and unity.

Harambee-Nyayoism. This term is clearly a complex matter involving the coming together, the working together, for the common good in peace, love and unity. Harambee-Nyayoism is a remarkable holistic perspective for meeting the diverse needs, skills, insights, and policies in the country as a whole.

Shalom. The word shalom is the major issue of this project. It belongs to a network of many related Hebrew words like shelema, salom and sillam. In Hebrew, a country is considered whole, complete, safe and at peace if it is in a condition of shelema. In the Swahili language, a country is said to be salama when the country enjoys progress, stability, prosperity and good climate socially and environmentally.

This project views the Hebrew word Shalom as

⁴¹ Ibid., 9.

interchangeable with the Swahili word Usalama which means the restoration, reconciliation, healing and sufficiency of a violated or damaged human and ecological situation. The Swahili word usalama will be applied more frequently than the Hebrew word Shalom.

Work Previously Done in the Field

From the work done previously in the field, it is clear that studies on the Presbyterian Church of East Africa are few and isolated from one another. The existing literature focuses on history, church growth and the church's cultural role in Kenya. As a result, these works give the reader an incomplete sense of the state of the field. Even more important, they omit some of the most important aspects of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa.

The first treatise on this field is by Robert Macpherson--The Presbyterian Church in Kenya. Macpherson focuses almost exclusively on history. It is the most systematic survey of the historical development of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa. The writer highlights the introduction of Presbyterianism in Kenya up to 1970. The other few works that seek to provide a comprehensive overview of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa are mostly written as dissertations for masters degrees. The Rev. Bernard Muindi, the current moderator of PCEA, presented one such thesis at the Fuller Theological Seminary

in June 1975. His thesis is entitled, The Growth of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa: Facing the Mount of God. Muindi deals with the expansion of the Presbyterian Church and the impact of the gospel in Kenya. He gives a missiological perspective to the development of the church. He acknowledges the ambiguities of mission work, especially in cultural affairs.

The second thesis is by the Rev. Wilfred C. Kogo, entitled, The Structures, Organization and Development of the Presbyterian Church Of East Africa: From 1907-1981. With Social Reference To Kikuyu Cultural and Social Factors. Kogo provides an afflicted social-cultural dimension of the church and its organization among the Kikuyu people. He applies Presbyterian Christianity to the sufferings and injustice which the Kikuyu experienced through colonialism. He demonstrates the role of education among the Kikuyu. The final document is a research paper for a bachelor's of divinity degree by this writer, The Growth of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa in Meru: 1921-1980. This study focuses on the historical development of the Church in the author's home district in Kenya. It has some content on the Meru culture and suggests possible indigenization of the gospel in Meru.

On the political side, Daniel T. Arap Moi, in Kenya African Nationalism, Nvayo Philosophy and Principles, gives

key ideas on the Kenya context while at the same time making observations on the East African and African scenes. Moi offers good illustrations regarding the Kenya's harambee-nyayoism--the common good, peace, love and unity. This book is important for this project because the author believes that the Church and the state penetrate each other and that the wholeness, the welfare and the prosperity of the state are the cause of rejoicing for the Church.

The Church needs to understand the state and find ways to manage the relationships with the multiple levels of the government. The politicians and the pastors often carry narrow, stereotypic conceptions of each other that impede effectiveness on both sides. At a time when confidence in the state is reaching a record low, it is imperative that the church and the state seek both common ground and a shared understanding that can help to strengthen both.

This project rightfully considers the Christians who form about 60 percent⁴² of Kenya's society to be its audience, that is, those citizens that the politicians, pastors and other leaders are reaching out to serve.

Scope and Limitation of the Project

The scope and limitation of the project is the biblical Presbyterianism and its historical motif of shalom as the

⁴² Mission Yearbook (1987), 305.

central vision for mission and pastoral work in Kenya. Its objective is to re-establish the violated intactness of the community and the well-being of the threatened ecology. It seeks to understand, strengthen and benefit the community life and work in the congregations, education in the theological institutions and in the larger society. None of the project's chapters are exhaustive in any way. The chapters touch sensitive issues for which there may be different approaches, questions, answers and points of view.

Procedure for Integration

The procedure for the integration of this project is historical, educational and ethical--a comprehensive set of approaches that the pastors, lay leaders and members of the Church can read and understand. History provides the record of important events that happened to the Church, to the nation or to individuals. The education provides pragmatic examples in the transformation of the community of faith. The ethical discipline discusses what the Christian community ought to do (duty) and what moral power is necessary to attain and accomplish duty (virtue).

Chapter Outline

Chapter 1 sets the stage for the approach to the project. It outlines the writers' major experiences in the ministry at the PCEA Nanyuki Parish. The author bases the vision of shalom on his experiences in the parish, the

biblical Presbyterianism and the historical development of PCEA in Kenya. The chapter serves as the introduction and provides the logic of the following chapters as well as the holistic purpose of the whole project. Chapter 2 discusses the biblical and historical development of the presbyterian vision. It surveys the basic Presbyterian characteristics but elicits three of them, that is, the Presbyterian theocratic, and liberation implications. The Presbyterian vision is challenging, essential and effective.

Chapter 3 is the heart of the project: It surveys the vision of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, all the way from its inception in Kenya to the present times. It points out the four-pronged Presbyterian approach of evangelical, medical, educational and industrial services. Chapter 4 examines the role of the Presbyterian Church in Kenya's education. Chapter 5 explores the role of the Church in the African culture. Chapter 6 examines the role of the Church in ecofeminism. Chapter 7 presents the contribution of the Church to the politics of the country. Chapter 8 discusses the biblical theology of Usalama (Shalom). Chapter 9 is a conclusion based on leadership for usalama. It suggests further steps for research.

Conclusion

A vision of shalom for the Presbyterian Church of East Africa is studied in order to assist Christians and members

of the society to better understand and respond to social and ecological justice in their prayers, thoughts, plans and actions. The chapters in this project form the historical and contemporary contexts from which Christians must have their vision of shalom, live, preach, teach, farm, trade, learn, operate and are influenced and influence others in turn. Many of these influences are subject to constant change, but the vision of the church may remain more or less constant in the 1990's and the 21st century.

The people of Kenya, like other Africans, believe that throughout the universe great forces are at work "striving to bring greater unity of all living things.... People who are dependent on and live in closest relationship with nature are most conscious of the operation of these forces. The pulse of their lives beats in harmony with the pulse of the universe" (Kenneth Kaunda).⁴³

The close African relationships are at stake due to the omission of the integrity of creation and a growing distrust of Kenya's political and social institutions.⁴⁴

The Kenyan economic context is dominated by the specter of economic crisis as a result of unstable coffee and tea prices. The Church finds it challenging to put up with the

⁴³ Mission Yearbook (1987), 293.

⁴⁴ From an article in the Weekly Review [Nairobi], 4 May 1990, 6.

policy of Jitegemea (self-reliance) while at the same time coping with the cost of living which continues the upward spiral. High unemployment drives salaries down and decreases financial support.⁴⁵

At the same time, the effect of lower rainfall on agricultural production and the prospects of diminishing foreign investments continues inflation. The demographic context is seeing much growth in the numbers of young people and a movement of population from the rural areas into the large urban areas like Nairobi.

The cause "a vision of shalom," hereafter will be frequently used as "vision of usalama." The vision of usalama is helpful to the individual believers, congregations, senior executives in large companies, hospital administrators, school headmasters and college principals. It may help in many of the informal settings of daily life in high school Christian unions, revival fellowships, families, self-help groups and in all critical issues that arise from violated human relationships and the degraded human environment.

⁴⁵ Mission Yearbook (1987), 295.

CHAPTER 2

The Setting of the Project

Biblical Presbyterianism

So let us use these days to dream, let us use these days to prophesy: let us use these days to see visions of love, and peace and justice. Let us use these days to affirm with humility, with joy, with faith, with courage; JESUS CHRIST--THE LIFE OF THE WORLD.¹

The above quotation has to do with dreaming a new big dream of shalom in Jesus Christ--the life of the world. This chapter attempts to describe the general biblical and historical dream or vision of Presbyterianism. Many will be interested in the historical lessons and values emerging from the Presbyterian vision. Elements in Presbyterianism may be valuable for other Churches and communities to study with advantage.

The Presbyterian vision in this project is closely related to its polity and is firmly rooted and grounded in the biblical word presbyter, which comes from the Greek word presbuteros, translated into English to mean elder. The word in Hebrew is zagen, and occurs more than one hundred

¹ Irvine Presbyterian Church, Worship Bulletin, Irvine, Calif., 22 July 1990. The phrase at the end is the World Council of Churches' theme for the 6th Assembly.

times in the Old Testament, and sixty times in the New Testament.² The concept of elders is well taken in many African cultures such as the Kikuyu and Meru who were led by councils of elders. Presbyterianism, therefore, finds a rich background for its growth and development in Kenya where most communities were traditionally led by elders rather than Kings and Chieftainships.

Presbyterianism: A Commission From the Burning Bush

The Presbyterian vision was initiated by the great Hebrew national hero Moses, a wise leader, author, statesman, poet, law-giver and prophet.³ He saw a vision of the burning bush, from which he was commissioned to return to Egypt and deliver Israel from slavery (Exod. 3:1-12).

Moses was born and brought up in Egypt, Africa. He was adopted as the son of the pharaoh's daughter (Exod. 2:10) and was instructed in all the wisdom of the Africans in Egypt (Acts 7:22). He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter (Exod. 2:11-14; Acts 7:24). Thus, Moses imperiled his civil rights as well as his right to the throne.

² Walter L. Lingle, Presbyterians (Richmond: John Knox, 1963), 9.

³ M. G. Kyle, "Moses," The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, ed. James Orr (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952), 2083.

In what is definitely a good lesson, Moses chose to be the friend of the people--the slaves of the Egyptian Empire--rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin, materialism and prestige for a season. Moses chose to share ill treatment with the people of God. He decided to be a nobody and to do right rather than to be a tyrant and rule Egypt (Heb. 11:25-26; Acts 7:25-28).

Driven by a compelling vision for justice, Moses deprived himself of the privileges and comforts of the Egyptian royal court. He went out as a poor wanderer (Exod. 2:15). At last Moses reached Midian where he was transformed into a wise statesman, leader and prophet. (God usually prepares leaders in very strange and humble circumstances. David was keeping his father's flocks. Elijah was on the mountain slopes of Gilead. John the Baptist was in the wilderness of Judea. Jesus was in the shop of a Galilean carpenter. And Moses was a shepherd in Midian.)

While watching after the flocks in the wilderness, Moses had a clear vision at the scene of the burning bush. God was revealed in a theophany with fire such as mentioned in Exod. 3:2; 13:21; 19:18. From this point God commissioned Moses to lead Israel out of slavery into freedom and gave him the authority to issue the call for the first general assembly.

But Moses asked, "If I go to the people of Israel and tell them that their father's God has sent me, they will ask, 'Which God are you talking about?' What shall I tell them?" "The Sovereign God," (Or "the Living God"--literally, "I am whom I am," or "I will be what I will be.") was the reply... "Call together all the elders of Israel," God instructed him, "and tell them about Jehovah appearing to you here in this burning bush and that he said to you, 'I have visited my people, and have seen what is happening to them there in Egypt. I promise to rescue them from the drudgery and humiliation they are undergoing...'" (Exod. 3:13-17 LB).

The encounter of Moses with God points the Presbyterians to a vision of liberation, justice and shalom for the poor communities of the world and the exploitation of creation. It is a revelation not only for the burning bush but for the role of elders in society.

Elders of Vision

The elders are of special leadership significance. The book of Deuteronomy is the farewell address of Moses to the elders in the hearing of the people. Chapters 23 and 24 of the book of Joshua are similar addresses of Joshua to the elders as representatives of the people.

The elders as representatives of the people came to Samuel to ask for a king (1 Sam. 8:4). The elders on behalf of the people came down to Hebron to invite David to take dominion over the whole nation (2 Sam. 5:3). When Solomon dedicated the temple at Jerusalem, he assembled the elders and the people to unite with him in that service (1 Kings

8:1). This system of a representative type of government by the elders is clear in the Old Testament.

In the New Testament, the synagogue had as its governing body a group of elders over which the chief ruler was the presiding officer. The authority to put improper persons out of the synagogue was vested in these elders. About ten families constituted a synagogue and three rulers formed the governing body.

Jesus frequently addressed the people in the synagogues. They were part of Judaism, the religion of Jesus' time. The synagogues had already familiarized the people with a governing body of their own representatives. Thus, Presbyterian organization is a vision that has continued from the days of Moses in the wilderness to New Testament times.

In the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles and in all the Epistles, we find a vision of elder and teacher being used in the synagogue worship and in exhortations in the assemblies. The early Church Christians were so energetic in calling their followers together for mutual encouragement, prayer and exhortation, they soon came to be known as the ekklesia (called out) by God and sent out to call others to come for this salvation. The watchword of the Church was "the great commission": "Therefore go and make disciples in all the nations [literally, "of all

nations"] , baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19 LB).

As the ekklesia continued through missionaries, so the Church grew and there was need for more elders. Paul and Barnabus ordained elders in every Church which they organized. In Acts 20:17, Paul sent for the elders of the Church at Ephesus to meet him at Miletus. In Titus 1:15, Paul commands Titus to ordain elders in every city. The New Testament Church was usually governed by elders.

The Church in the wilderness in the times of Moses was governed by elders (Exod. 3:16; Num 11:16). The Old Testament Church and the New Testament Church are one and the same under different arrangements. Galatians 3:29 indicates that if we are the Christ's, we are the true seed of Abraham. The Church is like an olive tree whose roots and trunk reach back into the Old Testament.

The gentile Christians are branches grafted into this ancient tree (Rom. 11:17-21). In Ephesians 2:20, the Christian Church is built upon the foundation of the prophets and the apostles, with Jesus Christ himself being their chief cornerstone. It remained the task of the Church elders to govern and extend pastoral care in a Church that was so well constituted with Christ as the cornerstone.

The elders were sometimes called bishops. In Acts 20:17 Paul sends for the elders of the Church at Ephesus.

In Acts 20:28, he calls these same people bishops. "That 'elders' and 'bishops' are in apostolic and sub-apostolic times the same is now almost universally admitted. In most New Testament references their functions are identical. The most probable explanation of the difference of names is that 'elder' refers mainly to the person and 'bishop' to the office; the name 'elder' emphasizes what he is, while 'bishop,' that is 'overseer,' emphasizes what the elder or presbyter does."⁴ However, the fact that elders are sometimes called bishops has a very important bearing upon the development of the church government in the centuries that follow.

In 1 Timothy 5:17, there is an indication that there were two kinds of elders--teaching elders (ministers) and ruling elders. Even the apostle Peter refers to himself as an elder in 1 Peter 5:17. The Presbyterian system has a combination of a pastor or a teaching elder, and a group of ruling elders. The pastor and the ruling elders constitute the session, which is the governing body of the Presbyterian Church.

The elders in the New Testament Church are elected by the people. In Acts 1:23-26 Mathias is elected to replace

⁴ A. C. Grant, "Elder in the New Testament," The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952), 924.

Judas. The disciples take part not only in the election of Mathias but also in the election of the seven deacons in (Acts 6:3). And they ordain elders in every church (Acts 14:23). The Greek word translated "ordain" in this passage literally means the raising of the hands, and it may refer to the election of elders by the raising of hands rather than to their ordination by the laying on of hands.

The word ordination can mean many things, including to set in order, to arrange, to appoint to office, to prepare and to destine. Nowadays, the word is generally used in the sense of appointing ceremonially to the ministerial or priestly office, or to confirm holy orders. It is the act of investing with ministerial or sacerdotal rank, the setting apart for an office in the Christian ministry.³ Ordination is a part of the Christian representative government which has always formed a fundamental feature of Presbyterianism.

Deacons

The representative Presbyterian vision views the office of a deacon as one that looks after the temporal affairs of the church and demonstrates ample empathy, compassion and service after the example of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a

³ Miall Edwards, "Ordain," The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, ed. James Orr (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952), 2199.

ministry of shalom and justice to the community in time of need and distress.

The word deacon occurs in sundry places in the New Testament. Examples are Acts 6:1-5, where deacons are elected; Philippians 1:1, where Paul sends his greetings to the bishops (elders) and deacons of the church at Philippi; and in 1 Tim. 3:10-13, where Paul describes the qualifications of deacons but says nothing about their duties. The three-fold office of bishops, elders and deacons appears to have been well established in some New Testament Churches.

Generally, the task of deacons in the early church was to minister to the poor and thus enable the apostles to give themselves entirely to prayers. They were to relieve the apostles by relieving the poor. The deacons are to attend to all the temporal and financial matters, and leave the pastor free to give himself to the ministry of the word and the sacraments. The Presbyterians have not yet fully realized all the possibilities of the office of a deacon. They have the potential of a great ministry of compassion in the society and creation.

The Presbyterians can use their representative system for the promotion of shalom in civil and religious liberty among the pluralistic communities of our times. As a practical system, we see in Acts 15, there arises the

question as to whether the Gentiles can become acceptable Christians to the Jews without physical circumcision. There is a sharp disagreement between Paul who thinks physical circumcision is not necessary for Church membership and Peter who thinks it is essential.

The issue could easily split the young apostolic Church. If the Church at Antioch could settle the question for herself, Paul and Barnabas, who are the elders at Antioch were abundantly able to solve this problem. Instead, the Church at Antioch referred the question to the Church council which met in Jerusalem. The council was composed of the apostles and the elders. After the council settled the question, the Church at Antioch and all the other Churches accepted the decision. Presbyterianism is a vision that bound the New Testament Churches together into one body. The presbytery is this kind of a council that ties all the Presbyterian Churches together by a series of courts that form one organic whole.

Other Forms of Church Governments

There are two other well known visions of Church government, namely, the episcopal and the congregational. Roman Catholics, Anglicans (Episcopalians), and Methodists are examples of the episcopal type of government. Baptists and some Pentecostals are examples of the congregational form of Church government. The two forms of government are

valid and scriptural but the Presbyterians believe that the vision of a representative government by the people for the people and of the people is the usual democratic and theocratic form in the Bible.

Presbyterians do not see in the New Testament any distinctions between the duties of an episcopal bishop and those of the ordinary pastor. Presbyterians hold to what is called "the parity or equality of the ministry."⁴ The authority of all ministers is equal. At various times different ministers may be appointed to various departments of work, although all ministers are equally eligible. The episcopal Church has no real equality and no representative of the people.

The congregational or independent Church considers all its ministers just as other Church members. The powers of admission, trial and exclusion of Church members belongs equally to all members of the congregation. The Church officers are simply an executive committee to carry out the will of the congregation as expressed by a vote in regular meetings. Each congregation is entirely independent of any other and there is no such a thing as an appeal. There are associations but these are of individuals rather than of the Churches, and there are councils called, but their

⁴ J. A. Hills, Presbyterians (Rahway, N.J.: Mershon, 1892), 34.

conclusions are simply advice which the individual church may follow or disregard.

The Presbyterian vision views the decision at the council of Jerusalem not as advice but as an authoritative determination of the question. It is not the decision of all the Church members but of the appointed elders representing and serving the various churches.

Papacy

It is difficult to keep a group of elders on a perfect equality. After A.D. 100, or after the death of the apostles, one elder rose above the others in some churches. At their meetings, the group of elders had to have a presiding bishop who later became a permanent officer of the church. The bishop of a church in an important center became more prominent than the bishop in a more obscure church. As a result, there developed diocesan bishops who exercised influence and authority over groups of churches. Cyprian, the bishop of Carthage martyred in A.D. 258, said:

The bishop is in the church, and the church is in the bishop, and if anyone is not with the bishop he is not in the church.⁷

He believed the Apostles were bishops, and that they ordained bishops who in turn ordain others in succession, and that the true faith of the Bible is thus handed down.

⁷ Lingle, 18.

Bishops couldn't stay in equality and so those in large metropolitan centres became metropolitans or metropolitan archbishops. After a while some metropolitan bishops of Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem began to have more authority than others. So they were called the patriarchs. But even the patriarchs could not stay on an equal basis. There was a contest between the patriarchs of Rome and Constantinople. The patriarch of Rome, the first capital of the empire, won and became known as the Pope of Rome.

Thus, within 500 years, the Presbyterian polity which is also the New Testament representative form of government by elders, evolved into the Roman Catholic Church, with its priests, bishops, metropolitans, patriarchs and the Pope. By A.D. 590 the Pope of Rome stood at the top of the whole western Church. As the years slipped by, the papacy became very powerful, and the Church believed in purgatory, maryliology and other superstitions. For many centuries of struggle, the vision of the Church remained distorted and involved in deep moral corruption until the reformation days of Martin Luther.

Martin Luther's Quest to Reform Papacy

Realizing the vision of the Church was dwindling, Martin Luther (1483-1546) led the Reformation. A monk that lived an upright life and devoted himself to religious

ceremonies and activities, Martin Luther rejected prolonged fasting, performance of ceremonies, payment of fees to priests and churches, and the unnatural renunciation of life's wholesome things. These activities were not good enough to earn God's favor. He cited Romans 3:17 "The righteous shall live by faith." But he was faced with the spectacle of the Pope raising funds to build St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome through the selling of "indulgences," by which the purchasers were supposed to be delivered from certain punishments after death. That papal lack of vision triggered the Reformation.

On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther nailed to the Church door his 99 theses or propositions attacking the whole system of indulgences. The Pope replied by sending a bull or official order excommunicating Luther. Luther replied by publicly burning the bull, an act symbolizing his rejection of Papal authority. When required to recant, or repudiate the things he had said against the Roman Church, Luther stood before Charles V, the emperor of Germany, and before the Diet or parliament at Worms and said:

"I shall not retract one iota, so Christ help me."
 Tradition says that he replied further: "Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise. God help me!
 Amen."^a

^a Leffers A. Loetscher, A Brief History of the Presbyterians (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978), 22.

Luther fought courageously and won the battle against Church corruption before the princes, the nobles and the powerful political and financial papal authority. He was a great and heroic figure who preached the doctrines of salvation by grace, justification by faith alone, and the priesthood of all believers. He laid the foundations but did not work out an elaborate theology. It remained for John Calvin to become the great constructive leader of the Reformation, and to revive the vision of the representative form of church government which we call Presbyterianism.

John Calvin and Presbyterianism (1509-1564)

John Calvin revived biblical Presbyterianism. Calvin was born to Roman Catholic parents, on July 10, 1509, in the town of Noyon, 50 miles northeast of Paris. He originally expected to become a lawyer and studied logic, Hebrew, Greek, Latin and philosophy in three leading French universities. As he studied hard, thought deeply and prayed, Calvin was suddenly converted from Roman Catholicism. He then published the famous Institutes of the Christian Religion in the spring of 1536, at the age of twenty-three.

Calvin moved out in August 1536 to preach in Geneva, Switzerland, fleeing the persecutions of Christians in France. In Geneva, Calvin met the Rev. William Farell, who insisted that God was calling Calvin to remain and labor in

Geneva, and that if Calvin preferred scholarly leisure to the clear voice of duty, the curse of God would rest upon him. Calvin was conscience-smitten and remained to labor in Geneva; within years, however, he and Farell were banished from the city for resisting efforts by the civil government to interfere in Church affairs. However, Geneva suffered due to the loss of Calvin's leadership and within years he was invited back.

Back in Geneva, Calvin developed the modern vision of the Presbyterian Church government composed of pastors, teachers, elders, and deacons. The clergy were equal without superior bishops over them, and the lay elders, twelve in number, were elected by the civil magistrates from their own number to share with the clergy in church government. A representative civil government emerged in the commercial city of Geneva and contributed greatly in later years towards the development of democracy.

The lovers of human freedom in the representative forms of government owe much to John Calvin. Bancroft, the American historian, says: "He that will not honor the memory and respect the influence of Calvin knows but little of the origin of American liberty."⁹

⁹ Lingle, 22.

Calvin was so influential in Geneva that persons were rebuked for moral laxity and the civil government was encouraged to fine or to imprison them. The ministers themselves met every week for discussion and every quarter year for self-discipline. The Church government for the city of Geneva was exercised by one consistory composed of all the ministers and the twelve elders. This "Consistory" performed the function of church discipline. A famous visitor from Scotland, John Knox, called Geneva

the most perfect school of Christ that ever was in the earth since the days of the apostles.¹⁰

Calvin encouraged the business life of Geneva, including the weaving industry and the right of moneylenders to charge interest on their loans. More than most theologians and Church leaders of the Middle Ages, Calvin understood the business people's viewpoints and needs. He insisted on the duty of the Church to speak out against and to punish economic sins.

In Calvin's views, God is the God of the state or nation which must be guided by God's words. Both the nation and the Church are directly under God. The nation should protect and support a true Church but should not interfere in its internal affairs. Because God has appointed governments, Christians must obey them, except only when the

¹⁰ Ibid., 26.

government commands the Christians to do what is contrary to God's revealed will. In that case, Christians must refuse to obey, whatever the penalty. Individual citizens must not revolt even against a wicked government. But a part of the government like the parliament may lead a revolt against an evil ruler. Only God is to be obeyed unconditionally.

Calvin was interested in the total life of the community. He developed education on both the elementary and the higher level, culminating in the Geneva Academy which opened in 1559. Calvin believed that religion and learning should always go hand in hand. The Church controlled its schools and only Christian teachers were employed. Calvin set high standards of education and became the father of a popular free system of education.

Calvin's ecological interests lay in everything that affected the lives and influenced the welfare of the people. He believed that Christianity should be carried into every relationship of life. He did not neglect the material prosperity of the city. Greater cleanliness was introduced and promoted. Calvin insisted upon the removal of filth from houses and the narrow and crowded streets. He induced the magistrates to superintend the markets, and to prevent the sale of unhealthy food. Low taverns and drinking shops were abolished and intemperance diminished. Mendicancy in the streets was prohibited. A hospital and poorhouse was

provided and well-conducted. Efforts were made to give useful employment to everyone who could work. Altogether, Geneva owed her moral and temporal prosperity, her intellectual and literary activity, her social refinement and her worldwide fame largely to the shalom vision of Calvin the reformer. Calvin's presbyterian vision set a high and noble example of a model community which has profoundly influenced the whole of Christianity, including the Presbyterian Church of East Africa.

Calvin and Mission

The Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) is not only part and parcel of that leadership by elders established by Moses but also a product of Calvin's missiological vision. Calvin did not view mission as a function of imperialism and colonialism. He was certainly not hostile to world-wide evangelism. His theology logically called for mission action, although he did not enunciate it. Calvin declared in the commentary on 1 Tim. 2:4 that

no nation of the earth and no rank of society is excluded from salvation, since God wills to offer the Gospel to all without exception. Since the preaching of the Gospel brings life, (the

apostle) rightly concludes that God regards all men as being equally worthy to share in salvation.¹¹

Christ is Lord as well as Savior of all. In a commentary on Isaiah 2:4 he states "Christ is not sent to the Jews only, that he may reign over them, but that he may hold his sway over the whole earth."¹² The Church is gathered indiscriminately out of all nations.¹³ The Kingdom extends its boundaries far and wide.¹⁴ In Micah 2:14, Calvin comments, "The Kingdom of Christ was only begun in the world, when God commanded the gospel to be everywhere proclaimed."¹⁵

It can be inferred that Calvin had a missionary vision, but he left the vision of missions to his spiritual descendants some generations later to find and respond to the mission field. The missions to the world are motivated by the Calvinistic theology of giving glory to God and

¹¹ T. A. Smail, The Second Epistle of Paul The Apostle to the Corinthians and the Epistles to Timothy, Titus and Philamon (1950; reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 208-9.

¹² William Pringle, Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Isaiah, vol. 1 (1950; reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1958), 99.

¹³ Ibid., 99.

¹⁴ Ibid., 313.

¹⁵ John Owen, Commentary on the Twelve Minor Prophets, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1950), 265.

compassion for perishing souls and the wretched social condition of men and women.

Presbyterianism Presupposes Theocracy

Right from the time of Moses to the time of Jesus and later Calvin, the elders of the community represented the people in Egypt, wilderness, synagogues and the early Church for the sake of community welfare (shalom). These elders (presbyters) functioned under the authority of administration that came "from God, who has willed human society into existence.... God alone is the Lord of the conscience."¹⁶ All authority issues from God (theocracy). God rules, leads, guides, and provides wisdom for wise Church decisions. Human beings, the moderators, the chairpersons, the bishops and the popes can only be used of God in the process of decision making. But how does God's authority function in the words and hands of human beings? To some people, God functions through the pope who is the successor of St. Peter and the appointed authoritative representative of God as the head of the Christian community. To others, God works through the apostles who are the rulers of God's people on earth. These are responsible for shalom and can hand over the authority to others to determine the cause of shalom in the Church. For

¹⁶ Andrew C. Zenos, Presbyterianism in America (New York: T. Nelson and Sons, 1937), 15.

the Presbyterians, the Church means:

These persons in every nation, together with their children, who make profession of the holy religion of Christ and of submission to his laws.¹⁷

The authority and shalom of God is in these persons who are duly indwelt by the spirit through their faith in Jesus Christ. The Church is only one in spirit and cannot exist as a visible Church bound together by a common constitution if the congregations are self-sufficient and carry out the authority by themselves. The representatives act together for the purpose of the Church to determine the actions of shalom in the whole body. But a worldwide presbytery has not been created because different people in different nations carry different views, expressions and cultures. The papal effort to maintain a central seat of outward authority works only by the sacrifice of local freedom, shalom and autonomy.

Presbyterianism Presupposes Liberation Theology

Presbyterians find it hard to dispense with freedom. If Presbyterians were to follow the footmarks of Moses, they would have to reject worldly power, fame and comforts, and identify themselves with the poor. Moses, identifying with the poor, gave the people the laws of spiritual, physical and mental liberation. The ten commandments or words were

¹⁷ Ibid., 16.

meant to free. Thus, Moses, the man who called the first presbyterian assembly, blessed the world with a theology of liberation.

What is liberation theology? Liberation theology is based on the liberator Jesus who took the scroll of Isaiah, read it, and claimed to fulfill the words in that scroll:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; he has appointed me to preach Good News to the poor; he has sent me to heal the brokenhearted and to announce that captives shall be released and the blind shall see, that the downtrodden shall be freed from their oppressors, and that God is ready to give blessings to all who come to him (literally, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord). (Luke 4:18-19 LB)

Jesus learned many wise things as a young refugee boy in Egypt, Africa (Matt. 2:13-15). Liberation theology must also be traced from Moses, the African prophet and citizen of Egypt, without whom there could be no Judeo-Christian tradition as we know it today. Moses announced the ten commandments (words or precepts in Exodus 20) which liberate humanity from the oppression of idolatry, guilt, stress, murder, suicide, theft, malaise, adultery, fornication, conspiracy and jealousy. Salvation from these evils is highly considered.

In the worship service of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, the Lord's Prayer is said after the congregation confesses their miserable offenses, receives the assurance of the forgiveness of sins, and hears the

proclamation of the ten commandments. The Lord's prayer is not just a customary recital or a congregational daily routine. The ten commandments and the Lord's Prayer carry a crucial liberation message.

The Lord's prayer is a "liberating expression before God."¹⁸ The prayer liberates sincere Christians from dishonoring God, people and creation; from pride, self-centeredness and corruption; from hopelessness, despair and low self-esteem. The Lord's Prayer sets Christians free in their attitudes to God, to one another and to eternal life. It offers daily experience of liberation and ought not be tiresome or tedious.

Similarly, it is a liberating privilege to obey the ten Commandments because they are God's prescriptions, or directives for the common good. The ten commandments mean word, mouth, precept, command or speech of morality wherein the will of God is imposed upon the society as their law of conduct.¹⁹ In the New Testament, the idea is modified into love (Matt. 2:34-40; Mk. 12:28-34; cf Dt. 6:5; Lev. 19:18). Love for God and humanity is not a law but a desire, a

¹⁸ Myron S. Augsburger, "Matthew," The Communicator's Commentary, ed. Lloyd J. Ogilvie (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1982), 87.

¹⁹ T. Rees, "Commandment," The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, ed. James Orr (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952), 679.

principle, a motive, and a joyous experience.²⁰ In Jer. 31:31-34 and Psalm 51, the wonderful liberating idea of having the law in one's heart is presented as a command and a joyous expression of the Christian faith. The law and grace are friends that work together for the common good of all believers.

The representative Presbyterian system implies that a comprehensive vision of liberation theology has yet to be developed by Presbyterians all over the world. As far as liberation theology is concerned, the effectiveness of the established Presbyterian system is open to question. The revival of a truly effective liberation theology is either hindered or enhanced by the politics of liberation. A good example of possible contradictions in liberation theology is implicit in the following expression by Ali Mazrui:

The Jewish release from Egypt under Moses leadership has captured the imagination of many an African nationalist. South Africa's Albert Luthuli, Black Nobel prizewinner for peace, entitled his book Let My People Go after Moses's demand to the pharaoh. On the other hand, Luthuli's Dutch oppressors in South Africa saw their own trek north from British control as the equivalent of Moses's exit from pharaonic Egypt. The Afrikaners' more recent isolation among hostile neighbours is often equated with Israel's "heroic isolation" in the Middle East.²¹

²⁰ Ibid., 680.

²¹ Mazrui, 88.

Apparently, the Israelites, who seem to oppress the Palestinian right to self-determination even in these last days of the twentieth century, have their own story of liberation. The Afrikanners who also oppress the African nationals of South Africa on the basis of race have their own liberation story. Why have the Israelites and the Afrikanners turned into such terrible oppressors? Have they forgotten the pain, hurt, dehumanization and suffering that they have endured?

Some people claim liberation at the expense of others. The oppressed soon become tyrants after attaining their liberties? These ironies, contradictions and oppressive tendencies remain valid reasons for liberation theology. Canaan Banana, a minister, has written a people's creed to demonstrate the need for compassion.

People's Creed

We believe in a color blind God,
 maker of technicolor people,
 Who created the universe
 And provided abundant resources
 For equitable distribution among all people.
 We believe in Jesus Christ,
 Born of a common woman.
 He was ridiculed, disfigured and executed.
 On the third day He rose again and fought back:
 He storms the highest council of power
 Where He overturns the iron rule of injustice.
 From henceforth he shall continue
 To judge the hatred and arrogance of the world.
 We believe in the spirit of reconciliation,
 The united body of the dispossessed,
 The communion of power that overcomes the
 dehumanizing forces,

The resurrection of personhood, justice and
equality,
And in the final triumph of love.⁼⁼

The "People's Creed" contains some political significance for its author, who writes during his imprisonment for seeking freedom for his people from westerners in former Rhodesia. Moses seeks freedom for Israel from the Egyptians but he is not imprisoned. Yet, his vision includes a commission from God to liberate politically and economically the people of Israel from the Egyptian yoke of slavery. The liberation of Israel under the leadership of Moses represents the most comprehensive and significant basis for liberation theology.

For the Churches in the developing nations of Africa, Asia and Latin America, liberation theologies are contextual attempts designed to deal with all the religious, economic, racial, social, environmental, sexual and political forms of human oppression. Latin American theology focuses on economic, social and political oppression. Asian liberation theology seeks religious dialogue with the other major living religions. South African theology urges an end to

⁼⁼ Cited in the Worship Bulletin of South Hills Presbyterian Church, Pomona, Calif., 26 August 1990. The "People's Creed" was written by the Rev. Canaan Banana of Zimbabwe, Central Africa, while he was a political prisoner under the racist regime of Ian Smith in what was then called Rhodesia. Rev. Banana was eventually released to become the first president of independent Zimbabwe.

the evils of racism.²³ On the top cover of his book, An Agenda For Black Theology, Bonganjalo Goba says:

Doing theology in South Africa constitutes a problem and a challenge. It is a problem because of the nature of our political situation, in which blacks are not expected to think critically nor for that matter to theologize. For many of us it is always a risk to think and express our views openly, a risk which can lead to one's death. Cases in point are Steve Biko and many unknown heroes of the black struggle in SA. It is a challenge especially for black Christians, for it is an invitation to test the authenticity of our faith and to make a contribution to the current struggle for freedom in South Africa, and for that matter, the world.²⁴

African Christian theology must seek to liberate Christians from religious, cultural, economic and political oppression and exploitation from the West. If it hopes for victories, African theology has to avoid taking sides with either capitalism or Marxist ideologies which are often used to abuse Christianity. If both capitalism and Marxism are genuinely used in a self-critical democracy, they are likely to produce the best results, though still imperfect economic possibilities.

The challenge is to make capitalism and Marxism believe that God is on the side of the oppressed and to work together and democratically to the extent possible. How can

²³ Deane William Ferm, Third World Liberation Theologies (New York: Orbis, 1986), 1.

²⁴ Bonganjalo Goba, An Agenda For Black Theology (Johannesburg: Skotaville Publishers, 1988).

Marxists and capitalists work together for a just socio-economic transformation? If the oppressors and the oppressed work together in a spirit of harambee, as defined in Chapter 1, the world could move towards a just socio-economic change. A world harambee in liberation terms can produce favourable results if it is "nurtured and met with grace, courage and wisdom."²⁵

The critics of liberation theology, such as Bonaventure Kloppenburg, contend that the gospel is deemphasized as the historical setting is overstressed. The gospel becomes a secondary concern and subsequently gets lost in the shuffle.²⁶ Attaching the gospel to the conditions of the oppressed and the poor may be unfair because the gospel is designed for all people from all walks of life. There are a plurality of traditions in the church just as there are a plurality of the interpretations of the scriptures.²⁷

However, Bonaventure thinks that liberation theologians are not guilty of a theology of the "death of God" as the theologians of the 1960s. The three leading theologians of the "God is dead" theology are William Hamilton, Paul Van

²⁵ John K. Roth and Richard L. Rebenstein, Liberation Theology (Washington, D.C.: Washington Institute Press, 1988), 311.

²⁶ Bonaventure Kloppenburg, Temptation for Theology of Liberation (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1974), 2.

²⁷ Ibid.

Buren and Thomas J. J. Altizer. The "death of God" theology is radical and stirs interest and curiosity mixed with shock as it denies the reality and the significance of God.²⁸ "A theology without God makes about as much sense as physics without atoms or biology without cells."²⁹ It is hardly believable that a study of theology is possible without God.

The theologians of liberation view God in Jesus Christ as the subject of liberation. It is dramatically different from "God is dead" theology. Liberation theology is strong in emphasizing the immanent, relational and practical aspects of the underprivileged, poor and oppressed communities of the earth.

Presbyterianism Presupposes Democracy

The Presbyterian representative system may be seen as one that represents not only the rich and educated masses, but also the poor, oppressed, sick, illiterate and broken-hearted members of the society. Presbyterians must surely love freedom and democracy for all. By democracy here, I mean what Abraham Lincoln described as a "government of the people, by the people, for the people."³⁰ I do not mean those modern democracies which are the worst forms of

²⁸ Thomas W. Ogletree, The Death of God Controversy (Nashville: Abingdon, 1966), 11.

²⁹ Ibid., 12.

³⁰ "Democracy," World Book Encyclopedia, 24th ed.

dictatorships and yet regard themselves as the people's democracies.³¹

A democracy that does not permit citizens to criticize their government, and to have their basic freedoms of speech and press, seriously falls short of a democratic, representative government. A democratic constitution guarantees rights for treating everyone as equal in court trials and other legal matters. It ensures that opportunities exist for people to use their abilities, to choose their leaders and to express their opinions on various issues. Democracy permits citizens to vote by secret ballot, free from force or bribes. It requires that election results be protected against dishonesty.

Decisions in a democracy are made according to majority rule. The people accept the choices made by the majority of voters. The majority must keep in mind the rights and freedoms of the minority. The majority must be willing to listen to the views of the minority. The majority must also recognize the rights of the minority to try to become the majority by legal means.³²

Political parties are a necessary part of democratic government. The party or parties that are out of power

³¹ Ibid., 130.

³² Ibid., 127.

serve as the "loyal opposition."³³ That is, they criticize the policies and actions of the party in power. The party in power is called on to justify its actions, and is made responsible to the people. In a totalitarian country, criticism of the party in power may be labeled as treason. Often, only the "government party" is allowed to exist. Elections mean little in these countries. The people have no real choice among candidates, and no opportunity to express dissatisfaction with the government.³⁴

A democratic constitution divides the powers of the government among the president, the parliament, and the national courts. Democracy allows many organizations to carry on many social and economic activities that are for the most part, free of government control. But totalitarian societies are controlled by the government and their economy is almost completely owned and managed by the state.

Today's democracies have programs to provide economic security, to ease suffering, and to develop human potential. Such programs include unemployment insurance, minimum wage laws, old-age pensions, health insurance, civil rights laws, and aid to education. Democratic procedures for bringing about change make violent revolutions unnecessary.

³³ Ibid., 127.

³⁴ Ibid.

Democracy provides for the orderly change and succession of political leaders.

Democratic constitutions call for periodic free elections of government leaders. Democracies have an order of succession in case rulers die in office or are unable to perform their duties.³⁵ Like the Presbyterians, flexible democracies always encourage participation, education, and moral-economic development.

Summary

This chapter addresses the complex historical development of Presbyterianism. Presbyterianism is traceable in the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the early and modern Church. The Presbyterian vision of shalom bears a strong element of liberation theology and a challenge for all Presbyterians to be unreservedly involved in the theology of liberation. The society needs liberation from idol worship of materialism, loneliness, depression, divorce, injustice, greed, and exploitation of the poor, ugliness of physical poverty, dependency, oppression, and damage of creation.

Moses, Isaiah, Jesus, and the early Church sought to set society free from the oppression of all sorts of sin, blindness and poverty. The emergence of the powerful Church

³⁵ Ibid.

popes, archbishops, bishops and archdeacons diverted the Church from justice. The reformation movement greatly contributed to the shaping of the concept of justice, democracy and modern mission work. Calvin led the Reformation for Presbyterianism.

The basic distinction in the Presbyterian identity and lifestyle has resulted in a triple heritage of the Kirk-session, the Presbytery and the General Assembly. The phenomena of the Church elders, pastors, deacons and members is very important in the promotion of shalom. The office of deacons and the church members can be more fully utilized in intercommunity and environmental loving, caring concerns. The absence of a vision of shalom can make the Church sterile, barren and insensitive to the needs of people. A vision is an idea that fulfills the people's desire for the noble, the best and the highest.

CHAPTER 3

Presbyterian Church of East Africa

This chapter focuses on a general historical survey of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa. The vision of the Church includes the evangelical, medical, educational and industrial mission.¹ The Church has been uncritical and silent about the disintegrating cohesiveness of African communal life and the continuing degradation of the environment.

The Church has turned the gospel of liberation and wholeness into a message about the good life, success and competition. The Church has moved away from a broken, weeping, suffering Jesus. The meek, suffering humanity and creation are still silently hidden behind the big old ideas of missionary vision of evangelism, medicine, education and industry. The Church is called to preach a holistic liberating gospel of Jesus to the suffering world of humanity and the creation.

Businessmen Begin Mission

The process of establishing the PCEA was began in

¹ Mission Yearbook (1991), 252.

earnest in 1887 by William Mackinnon, Alexander Low Bruce, (son-in-law of David Livingstone) and some other directors of the Imperial British East Africa (IBEA) Chartered Company.

Spiritually,² they had an ardent desire to worship together and to serve Christ by spreading the Gospel. The immediate vision was to have their own Scottish Presbyterian Church of Scotland to enter into the race of expanding the Western influence in East Africa.³ Consequently, Mackinnon and Bruce got financial support from their families and friends amounting to about 10,000 pounds for the project.⁴

Economically, the Church of England had absorbed the African laborers off the Kenyan coast. The IBEA Co. needed to penetrate the interior of the territory in order to make the African people available for labor in the running of the company.

Politically, they conceived the presence of the Scottish mission as necessary in their concerted efforts to prepare the people for British rule. In 1891, a band of missionaries led by the Rev. James Stewart of Lovedale,

² R. Macpherson, The Presbyterian Church in Kenya (Nairobi: Jetegemea Publishers, 1970), 15.

³ Christian Religious Education 'A' Level Guide, (Nairobi: Jomo Kenyatta Foundation, 1978), 122.

⁴ Macpherson, 34.

landed in British East Africa (Kenya), and began a Christian mission at Kibwezi among the Kamba and the Maasai peoples of Kenya.⁵ They served this area under the name of the " East African Scottish Mission."⁶

Kibwezi Failure

At Kibwezi, the missionaries cleared the bush, planted grapes and coffee seeds and started building without any delay. Just as the mission began to fulfill its purposes, the climatic conditions plus diseases such as malaria and dysentery brought suffering and misery to the missionaries. The number of missionaries was reduced to near nothing as many of them died of disease and other mysterious circumstances. Out of the original missionary party, Thomas Watson and his wife, Minnie, were the only survivors at Kibwezi. There exists a large grave yard at Kibwezi where the pioneering missionaries of the Church of Scotland were buried.

Following this tragedy, David Charters, a physician, and John Paterson, a gardener, were appointed for Kibwezi. This became another disaster. The two men went on a short hunting safari near Mbwinzau hill and disappeared. They

⁵ Ibid. 21.

⁶ Ibid.

searched for eight days but all in vain. The mission was failing.

Shift to Kikuyu New Mission Station

In December 1894, Watson was recalled to take charge at Kibwezi. Since the Station had a terrible reputation of illnesses, changes of staff, death toll and uncertain future, Watson decided to move to Dagoretti, a very attractive site. Unfortunately, he settled at Kikuyu in 1898 and not at Dagoretti. Suddenly, another tragedy struck as Watson contracted pneumonia and died on December 4, 1900.

Kikuyu Mission Station

It was Minnie, Watson's widow, that carried on the work among the Kikuyu community at a place called Thogoto (Kikuyu corruption of the word Scotland). Minnie was a dedicated, brave missionary woman. She continued teaching, taking care of the children's School in the morning and the larger evening School for younger men. Minnie saw the work at Kikuyu grow with many hurdles, thus, playing a key role in laying down the foundations of the early work of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa.

The Scottish business men handed over the work at Kikuyu to the Church of Scotland in 1901. The Scottish Church was used by God for building up a company of believers among the Kikuyu and Meru people. The Church reached these people through the work of its stations at

Kikuyu, Tumutumu (1908) and Chogoria (1915). In 1908, Henry Scott had this to say:

The foundations of Kikuyu Mission were laid in sacrifices, rare and costly, of lives laid down and lives spent... it seems to be the rule that the Church of Christ is laid on such foundations, and the honour is due to those who laid them deepest... Glory be to God for these.⁷

The vision, courage, determination, charisma, and dedication of Minnie and those other missionaries, formed the base of the East African Scottish Mission. During the years 1901-1908, a physician, Clement Scott, a man of dynamic personality, great creative gifts and persuasiveness in argument, worked at Kikuyu. His vision was of a Church victorious, leading Africa to unknown heights of civilization.

Following the evangelistic, medical, educational and industrial lines, Scott acquired the Kikuyu Mission estate in order to develop it agriculturally. Clement had spent twenty years of service in Malawi where he built up the Blantyre Mission on four great foundation stones of religious teaching and church life, medical work, industry (agricultural development, building, engineering, printing, storekeeping) and a wide spread school system.⁸ His critics

⁷ Macpherson, 303.

⁸ Ibid., 33.

approved of religious teaching and practice of medicine but considered industry and education a waste of funds that could be used in a more widespread preaching of the gospel.

Clement despaired in his latter years due to his failure in Kikuyu to make any progress towards achieving his vision. The Kikuyu people nicknamed him "Watenga" because of acquiring the land and clearing it for agricultural development.

The years 1908-1911 were a time of action under Henry Edwin Scott who succeeded Clement Scott (Watenga). The Kikuyu nicknamed Henry "Chichia" which meant he wore spectacles. He was a man of deep absorbing passion, versatile yet methodical, self-disciplined, balanced, tireless, and a practical man who tried to translate his predecessor's vision into a living reality.

Henry established the evangelistic and educational pattern for the rest of the missionary period.⁷ The school included training for apprentice tradesmen, teachers and hospital dressers. Scott's initiative in 1909, led not only to setting up Schools for the European settler children but also to the appointment of a Director of Education for the whole country by April 1911.

⁷ Ibid., 47.

Mission Growth

The years 1912-1926 were a period of growth in the mission field. The Foreign Mission Committee appointed a layman, John W. Arthur, called "Rigitari" by the Kikuyu because he was a medical doctor. John arrived at Kikuyu on New Year's eve in 1907.

John had worked closely with Henry Scott and was familiar with the policies and methods of his vision. He served in this capacity for 25 years and took a key part in all the leading developments in the emergence of a missionary Church. He set up the first boarding school in Kikuyuland, the first hospital and the Church of the Torch between 1928 and 1933. Between 1913 and 1915, John surveyed and organized the missionary occupation of Chuka-Mwimbi (Meru).

In 1918, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland authorized the formation of the Presbytery of British East Africa. John presided over the establishment of the Presbytery in 1920. The Presbytery was comprised of the Kirk-sessions of Kikuyu, Tumutumu and St. Andrew's in Nairobi.¹⁰ The Presbytery consisted of ordained missionaries, African ordained ministers, ordained European

¹⁰ Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Practice and Procedure, 1.

elders and one African ordained church elder to be chosen annually.

The Presbytery was to be the final court of appeal in all matters affecting the church in Kenya or local ministers and elders. But the European ministers and elders still had the right of appeal to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. Its powers included the oversight of the Kirk Sessions, the licensing and ordination of local candidates for the ministry and they oversaw their training and thereafter. The approval of the course of study was reserved for the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

John was paternalistic and enjoyed a position of authority both through his triumphs and disasters. On the one hand, John's battle against female circumcision was viewed by Africans as destructive to the African rituals of the passage from girlhood to womanhood, marriage and motherhood. He was consciously or unconsciously attacking the very heart of education for the female preparations in the lessons of courtship, choice, marriage, wife-husband, mother-children, and family-community relationships, attitudes and responsibilities.

On the other hand, the negative reaction against John resulted in the development of African nationalism and the formation of African Independent Churches. The female circumcision controversy of the early 1930s gave powerful

impetus towards the African Church and political independence. And God sustained Kikuyu, Tumutumu and Chogoria Missions for Christian services to society.

Tumutumu Mission Station

True to his nickname the "happy warrior," John and his friends followed the dangerous path through the mirangini (baobab) forests of the Aberdare Mountains to Tumutumu hill where John said the following prayer: "Lord, capture this land and let it be thy own."¹¹ They had as their motto "Forwards ever, backwards never."

On September 30, 1908, the African Petero Mugo from Kikkuyu Mission Station, commenced work at Tumutumu. The missionaries were wise enough to recruit indigenous leadership to begin other mission stations like Tumutumu and Chogoria. On Christmas Day 1908, the first public baptisms were conducted at Tumutumu and work was growing rapidly over there. Tumutumu was a field full of promise, with a dense population of about 50,000 people.¹² Tumutumu was like a "promised land" of friendly people who entertained and danced for their guests. They were ready and easily

¹¹ Bernard M. Muindi, "Facing the Mount of God: The Presbyterian Church Around Mt. Kenya," (M. A. Thesis, Fuller Theological Seminary, 1975), 17.

¹² Ibid.

accessible for the spiritual, mental and physical missionary development.

In order to spearhead the evangelistic, educational, medical, industrial vision, H. R. Philip, along with the Africans Samuel Gitau and Joshua Matenjwa, arrived at Tumutumu on April 16, 1910. They made their converts promise to live by the law of God, give up all evil customs, contribute their substance towards the spreading of the Gospel, take but one wife, and to live a good life at home in order to lead others by their examples.¹³ In obedience to the missionary commission of Mathew 28, the Tumutumu Mission extended work into Meru, at Chogoria.

Chogoria Mission Station

The CSM began to consider opening work among the Meru people of Chuka and Mwimbi as early as 1912. But the years (1912-1920) were difficult due to five main factors.¹⁴ First, the CMS was divided in opinion. Some missionaries had the idea of carrying out extension work in both German East Africa (mainland Tanzania) as well as Chuka and Mwimbi (Meru-Chogoria), while others could not see how work could

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Elias Mbaabu, "Origins and Development of the Presbyterian Church in Meru, 1922-1979," research paper presented to the Association of Theological Institutions in Eastern Africa, Limuru, St. Paul's United Theological College, July 1980, 14-15.

be carried out in both directions. A third group believed that mainland Tanzania was a more fruitful line of extension than Chogoria.

Second, the terrible 1914-1918 First World War, made many things drop into the background. The war assumed large proportions, became so prolonged and widespread that it involved heavy strains on the missionary efforts. Militarily, things were not very settled and people were not free from anxiety. Third, there was a great increase in the cost of materials and a difficulty in obtaining labor and supplies. Fourth, there was a shortage of personnel and this necessitated a pause in taking on new work. The missionaries, as well as, Africans faced the possibility of a call to military service. Fifth, the complete upset of railway arrangements and the congestion of docks delayed the drug orders and other materials for new work until more settled times. These national and global exigencies delayed the commencement of work in Chogoria.

The decision to open work in Chuka and Mwimbi was made by 1912 and would have begun as early as 1913 when John and his friends traveled for three solid days from Tumutumu to the Chuka-Embu border. As they crossed the river Thuchi (a boundary between the Meru and the Embu communities) on a thick fallen wood log, they prayed that the land being entered would be won for Christ who gave His life for the

whole world.¹⁵

In 1916, the African Kikuyu couple, Daudi Makumi and his wife Marion, began work at Chuka, but the Chuka people rejected Christianity. The couple moved to Mwimbi but the people were unresponsive. They began a School at a place called Kanyue but it failed to attain regular student attendance. Their mission ended unproductively.

By 1919, the African Daudi Wango (later Rev. Ishmaeli Wango) was sent to Kanyue to replace Daudi and Marion Makumi. His work at Kanyue also proved unfruitful and he left to go to School for further training in 1921. He left no converts and the work at Kanyue was abandoned.

At this point, the Kikuyu and Tumutumu Mission Stations agreed to transfer the work from Kanyue to Chogoria and to send teachers, medical dispensers and aids to start a fresh work at Chogoria. The first dispenser to go to Chogoria was Samson Maingi. Then, in 1922, Ashford and Joyce Clive Irvine, who were at Tumutumu at that time, felt led by the Spirit of God to go to Chogoria and begin systematic medical work there. They arrived at Chogoria on October 12, 1922.

The Chogoria people were friendly and they gave a warm welcome to the Irvine's. They offered them a gift of honey-a symbolic friendly gesture, and also slaughtered a

¹⁵ Ibid., 15.

ceremonial bull to seal the new friendship. In this friendly and peaceful atmosphere, the Irvine's settled and began a four-pronged approach of evangelism, education, medicine and farming. The Chogoria people became the first Africans in Kenya to plant coffee as a cash crop. Coffee is now the chief cash crop of Kenya that has replaced the subsistence of African farming.

By 1926, the Presbyterian Church was well established at Chogoria, Kikuyu and Tumutumu. It had developed some indigenous ordained ministry, a lay eldership, a strong education system, three relatively well-equipped hospitals, and it was also extending to the Rift Valley areas of Kenya.

As the work grew rapidly, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland revised its constitution in 1933 allowing the formation of the Presbytery of Kenya under Act XVI, 1936, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.¹⁴ It was created on the basis of bringing the missionaries and the congregation of St. Andrews, Nairobi together into an organic relationship with the Church of Scotland, thus removing the congregation of St. Andrews in Nairobi from the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of British East Africa.

In the year 1940, the Presbytery of British East Africa, exercising the powers granted to it under article 12

¹⁴ Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Practice and Procedure, 1.

of the revised Constitution of 1933, resolved to divide itself into two Presbyteries, under a synod, which exercised all the powers of the Presbytery of British East Africa in that constitution. It was this synod, which in 1943, with the assurance of the Foreign Mission Committee of the Church of Scotland, adopted a written constitution for the congregations under its jurisdiction, under the name of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa.¹⁷

In this constitution, the Presbyterian Church of East Africa declared itself to be an autonomous branch of the Church Universal. In 1945, the Synod, acting under the terms of its Constitution, paragraph 7 (Article 5) entered into an agreement with the American Baptist Gospel Missionary Society. The congregations of the Gospel Missionary Society converged with the Presbyterians to form the Chania Presbytery under the authority of the Synod. In 1952, the Presbyterian Church of East Africa and the Overseas Presbytery of Kenya were authorized by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to start discussions with the view of uniting in one church all of the Presbyterian work in East Africa.

In February 1956, the Church was united under the name

¹⁷ Ibid.

of "The Presbyterian Church of East Africa."¹⁸ It consisted of all ministers and congregations previously under the jurisdiction of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa and of the Overseas Presbytery of the Church of Scotland. The Church exercised jurisdiction over all ministers and congregations which had joined its fellowship in accordance with the Constitution within the territories of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania.

Thus, the missionary period (1891-1943) was a period of preparation of converts to Christianity and indigenous leadership. The missionary teaching undermined the social and religious foundations of the Kikuyu and Meru societies. Thus, the missionaries disturbed the cultural harmony between the community and the creation.

Why was this the case? The mission communities were not harmonious.¹⁹ According to John Willoughby, most missionaries were

manufactured out of traders, clerks and mechanics. The process is not a difficult one: a man, thinking he can improve his position by mission work, has only to go to a School for a year or two and learn a certain amount of medicine and carpentry, flavoured

¹⁸ Ibid., 2.

¹⁹ Ibid., 5.

with a little theology, and he is turned out a full-blown missionary and orthodox deacon by the local bishop.²⁰

There was a tendency to send better educated recruits to India and China where there was an allegedly more sophisticated paganism that apparently called for more highly trained missionaries. There was no time when the Africans were considered for educated missionaries. Some of the missionaries sent to East Africa were women who had no occupations. A few of them were clerks, teachers and musicians. To make matters worse, the male missionaries treated the female missionaries as if they were clearly second-class missionaries.

The men not only ignored women while writing the history, but also disregarded the recommendations of the women missionaries even as regarded the African women. The Africans did not see the difference between white males and females. What the Africans witnessed was a wicked disregard of the total African culture that messed up the African harmony with each other and creation.

The Africans have often associated the Church with ustarabu wa acunku, that is, Western civilization or whatever was going on in industrial Great Britain, which was ultimately based on a scientific rationalism that left

²⁰ John C. Willoughby, East Africa and Its Big Game (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1889), 26.

little room for the supernatural. The missionary home country seemed to promote material over spiritual values. Europeans destroyed social religious roles among their communities almost as much as they did by disrupting the African experience of God.

Western biblical criticism eroded the Scriptural authority, and the missionaries "escaped to Africa much as settlers fled a growing democracy and higher taxes at home."²¹ Ludwig Krapf did not like the western materialism, vain philosophy and popery. Therefore he wrote:

A civilized man who has no fear of God is indeed ten times worse off than a savage of Africa who fears his charms and leaves his neighbour's property intact.²²

The majority of European settlers in Kenya were irreligious, hard-drinking and sexually permissive people. They were embarrassing to the missionaries in their task of building a Christian western culture in Kenya.²³ They were the wrong people to de-Africanize or to "redeem" the African culture. Henry Hooper saw the enemy of the missionary enterprise no longer "hidden in the fastness of heathenism"

²¹ Robert W. Strayer, The Making of Mission Communities in East Africa (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1978), 87.

²² John Ludwig Krapf, letter to Venn, 16 April 1848, Church Missionary Society, London, CMS/MI-2.

²³ Norman Leys, Kenya (London: Hogarth Press, 1925), 211.

but rather as the "dead weight of materialism."²⁴ Christianity was a bad transplant of dead materialism from Europe.

The missionaries themselves viewed the de-Africanizing of Africans as having undesirable effects on their converts. They argued among themselves that too much education for a girl allegedly taught her to despise manual labor, practically rendering her unable to face temptation and unsuitable for future life of usefulness as a married woman.²⁵ The missionaries had some psychological, moral problems associated with women everywhere. They lacked a vision of shalom for the whole society.

The missionaries had no vision for urban life which they regarded as sinful. The city was the seat of satan that was associated with depravity and the absence of organic relationships. It produced self-centered young people and exposed them terribly to all sorts of grave temptations. The ideal Christian community was clearly rural and any connection with the city was a matter of deep regret to the missionaries. The missionary vision, unlike that of John Calvin, who influenced the whole city of

²⁴ H. D. Hooper, "The Expression of Christian Life in Primitive African Societies," International Review of Missions, 13, no. 49 (January 1924):67-73.

²⁵ Church Missionary Society, Minutes of Women's Conference, London, 21 June 1904, CMS/1904/84, n. p.

Geneva, was seriously deficient for the cities which were becoming the center of life.

The missionaries tried to control the access of people from what they regarded as potentially harmful or inappropriate modern opportunities. They regarded industrial education with considerable suspicion. But they argued it served to check conceit, train the hand and eye, develop accuracy, promote self respect and develop manual work, in all of which Africans were supposedly deficient. Some missionaries in the King's School hoped that an industrial program would remedy what they conceived as the African natural laziness.²⁶

The missionaries were concerned that Africans be prepared to take their proper place in the colonial economy, and that they be taught certain things that would make them more useful to Europeans. The case was stated by an AIM missionary in 1909 as follows:

In order to take their place among the White settlers who are occupying the country, they (Africans) must be fitted to understand the work and methods of the white man...It is the duty of all those who have anything to do with natives who are just coming out of the darkness of heathenism, to so train them that they should not aspire beyond what they

²⁶ H. W. Weatherhead, "The Educational Value of Industrial Work as Illustrated in King's School, Budo, Uganda." International Review of Missions 170 (1914): 343-44.

are able to do. But so that they shall be able to fill some place in the economy of the country where they dwell.²⁷

The missionaries stood in a special relationship with the colonial government amounting to a kind of quasi-established status. It was characteristic of the state established Churches of England and Scotland which regarded themselves as part of the colonial government and generally were accorded such a place. The Church of Scotland Mission (Presbyterian), for instance, enjoyed a special privileged position in the Imperial East Africa company and in the lead taken later by John Arthur who represented the African Interests as a member of the colonial government. The missionary vision was so much blurred by colonialism that it could not enhance the values of pastoral care and discipline for the restoration of Africans. The East African revival offered some hope.

East African Revival

The East African Revival is a long continuing renewal that began in central African countries of Rwanda and Burundi around 1937. It spread to East Africa in the early 1940s, and was experienced in earnest by 1945.²⁸

²⁷ Church Missionary Society, "Report of United Mission Conference," London, 7-11 June 1909, CMS/1909/126, n. p.

²⁸ W. B. Anderson, compiler, Makerere Occasional Research Papers, vol. 10, Kampala, Uganda, 1973, p. 4.

The key person at the break of the East African revival was the famous late William Nagenda of Uganda. William Nagenda's gospel message was predominantly based on the individual's relationship to God. The individual alone needed to see the depth of sin and to know God personally. The individual was powerful and had to be saved from sin. He cited the broken relationship between Adam and God as due to Adam's disobedience. The break was so serious that Adam and Eve were driven out of the Garden of Eden. Nagenda stressed: "Away from the garden, away away from God, away away from the Holy Spirit, away away from eternal life."²⁹

For Nagenda, people just came to Church but never really changed to become good stewards. He required that people repent and few resisted his demands, even his own wife, Sarah.³⁰ They came to God crying, missionaries and Africans alike. The revival created wonderful affections, honesty and a complete freedom from anything of tribal, denominational and racist antipathy.³¹

Revival can be likened to a Christian struggle with being in the world and yet not of the world. Sometimes it has tried to win the whole of East Africa to Christ, at

²⁹ Mbaabu, 45.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid., 46.

other times it has withdrawn from the politics of this worldliness. The results are absurd and ridiculous.

Revival takes place in a political world. Revival must make this world a little heaven, an ideal preparation for the great futuristic Christian heaven. Revival must be part and parcel of the message of Jesus Christ who said:

My purpose is to give life in all its fullness. (John 10:10 LB)

Jesus incarnate brings into the human lives an abundant new life, full of the desire for justice and wholeness. Abundant life deals with the question of true amnesty in some ways, delights in just laws and stable order, gets at the issues of economic and political inequalities, creates the notion that every person is a neighbor with needs and sustains healing in a broken, wounded and hostile world.

Without the vision of usalama, revival becomes just another social organization looking after the interests of individuals and groups. Revival can and ought to sustain such usalama as can change communities from greed for power and conflict which have become the central features of the Churches in Kenya today. Revival for usalama can be a strong witness of the love of God in East Africa. Dorothy Smoker states that:

Church life and growth in East Africa has been considerably influenced by what is known as the East African Revival Movement. It is safe to say that no church body in East

Africa has been wholly unaffected by it, and there are few areas where there is not at least a small group of the Brethren, as they call themselves, meeting regularly to praise God, to pray and to share together what they feel God is doing for them or has freshly shown them in the Bible. The wide distribution of these groups across East Africa and their rapid increase in numbers indicate that there is a considerable evangelistic dynamic in the revival.³²

Revival cannot only give increase in Church membership but can also raise such consciousness as strengthens and uplifts the afflicted community and creation. Revival can be a holistic harambee of hallelujahs--a powerful unifying force beyond the denominational loyalties and boundaries.

If revival falls short of a vision of usalama, it can bring gross misunderstandings in society. During the Mau Mau freedom and land restoration movement, the revival and the missionary Christians did not seem to understand the purpose of discussing the social oppressive structures of "color bar," wage discrepancies, land grievances, and discriminative policies against the poor. The Mau Mau, therefore, viewed the Christians as the separatist traitors who had become the "wives of the Europeans." However, many of the revivalists regarded themselves as "an army of martyrs, proven in the fire, unshaken and unshakable to

³² David B. Barrett, ed., African Initiatives in Religion (Nairobi: East African Publ. House, 1971), 96.

build up the church of the future."³³

The revival members regarded the Mau Mau as an untangled group of terrorists who were so threatening and formidable. The revival sought for spiritual freedom while the Mau Mau sought for political and economic freedom. In an attempt to reconcile the revival and the society, one of William Nagenda's most remarkable themes was on hope during the quest for Kenya's political independence. Nagenda preached that "Jesus Christ was the only Hope for me, for my family, for my church and for my nation."³⁴ Jesus is the hope for Africa.

Africanization

A program of Africanization and reorientation began in 1943 when the Church became autonomous. The process was accelerated after the political independence of Kenya on December 12, 1963. The local Church leadership was Africanized, but the church is still a recipient of overseas donations for running the hospital programs, projects, buying the drugs, and in some cases, paying the wages for the expatriate doctors and nurses.

The Church still uses the Bible that was translated

³³ Muindi, 148.

³⁴ Jediel Micheu, Personal interview in Chogoria, Kenya, 17 December 1979.

from the English language rather than from the original Hebrew and Greek biblical languages. The Constitution of the Church is itself western and looks very much the same as when it was set by the missionaries. A need for radical Africanization exists in PCEA and other churches in Kenya.

In 1989, for example, the Church of the Province of Kenya (CPK) was a divided house when the Katakwa and Mt. Elgon archdeaconries of Nambale diocese demanded the formation of their own Katakwa diocese. About 40 members of the Katakwa and Mt. Elgon archdeaconries made their resolve known in a dramatic march to the official residence of Archbishop Manasses Kuria on State House Road, Nairobi. They embarked on a hunger strike, vowing to fast to death if their demands remained unfulfilled. Considering this episode, it would appear then that the missionary oriented churches

tend to be rather authoritarian and paternalistic, perhaps, in an endeavor to protect not only their doctrines but their traditions as well, many of which have taken hundreds of years to find their present form and expression.... For the smaller splinter churches that do not have hundreds of years of tradition to protect, internal disagreements are sometimes sorted out in rather unorthodox ways. The reactions of the Kenyan faithful to preachers or bishops they do not like has run the whole gamut from boycotting church services to physically manhandling the preachers. In between, splinter groups have taken each other to the courts, thus implicitly acknowledging the final authority of the

secular state over their operations and, in the process, veiling even more the shady line between church and state. A protracted legal battle has been going on in Kenyan courts over the past two years between opposing factions of the Overcoming Faith Centre Church of Kenya and the final solution does not yet appear to be in sight... These and many other such incidents which have occurred in different churches across the country would tend to point to the fact that many church establishments in Kenya do not appear to have clearly established procedures for managing change or protest which originates from below. The Katakwa saga might do the whole country a good turn if it makes the main churches sit up and take cognizance of this fact.³⁵

If the Africanization is to bring a change, it must have a prophetic biblical vision of shalom that is bold enough to contextualize the Bibles, constitutions, hymns, liturgies and worship. This would truly express the local spirit which in turn, would enliven the spirit of catholicity, justice, peace, and self-reliance.

Jitegemea

The concepts of Jitegemea (self-reliance) comprise the new vision of the African Presbyterian leadership. The word Jitegemea does not exist in the Swahili dictionary. It was coined from the word kujitegemea--"to depend on oneself." Although the church depends on God, it is difficult to perceive how the poor can exactly become self-reliant. In 1972, the frustrated Presbyterian Church leaders became

³⁵ Cited in Weekly Review, [Nairobi], 30 June 1989.

tired of begging for the funds from abroad and launched a policy of Jitegemea which has now acquired the standard status of the Presbyterian Church motto.

The policy of Jitegemea creates a necessary urgent pressure for the African Church to look for sustainable ways and means to build and improve her own Church structures; to develop her own authentic and contextualized African theological ideas; to select, recruit and maintain a competent African personnel. The policy is helping to clear up the psychological and economic dependency on the West.³⁶

The concept of self-reliance is an absolutely worthy cause towards the restoration of the Church, society and creation. Jitegemea is an essential element of shalom a bold and daring hope to posture our faith precisely toward energies and interests of which the church has been fearful-but perhaps that is where God's strange guidance is taking us."³⁷ The prophet Ezekiel expresses the vision of shalom as follows:

I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will send down the showers in their season; they shall be showers of blessing. And the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield its increase, and they shall secure...They shall no

³⁶ All Africa Council of Churches, "Aid and Selfhood of the Church in Africa," Document 9(d), 3rd Assembly, 11-24 May 1974, Lusaka, Zambia, 7.

³⁷ Brueggemann, Living Toward a Vision, 11.

more be a prey to the nations, nor shall the beasts of the land devour them; they shall dwell securely, and none shall make them afraid. And I will provide for them plantations of shalom.
(Ezekiel 34:25-29a)

Ezekiel's vision is about a vibrant abundant life full of freedom, healing, prosperity, sharing, hope and joy. The church is not called to depend on foreign funds, personnel and resources. Jitegemea is an attempt to stop the songs, and dances of poverty. It is freedom from remote financial control, a cleansing ritual for the African Church from the demons of beggary and dependency. Titegemea is the freedom to share, learn, support and work together locally, nationally and globally.

Moratorium

In 1971, John Gatu, who was then the Secretary General of the PCEA aroused confusion and consternation in Western church circles by making a powerful appeal for a moratorium. The moratorium called for a

halt of both missionaries and money from overseas donors for a certain number of years. This would give the African Church time to rethink the whole question of personnel, finances and structure in African Churches. From this position of strength, the Church would then be able to formulate new guidelines and procedures under which expatriate missionaries would operate.³⁸

³⁸ Zablon John Nthamburi, A History of the Methodist Church in Kenya (Nairobi: Uzima Press, 1982), 143.

The All African Conference of Churches (AACC) also wanted the Churches to exercise self-reliance, self-restraint and diplomacy in requesting the overseas assistance. In lieu of the reality in the indigenous independent African Churches which grew rapidly without the money or the personnel from overseas, the AACC earnestly promoted the idea of the moratorium in 1974 at its meeting in Lusaka by passing the following resolution:

To enable the African Church to achieve the power of becoming a true instrument of liberating and reconciling the African people, as well as finding solutions to economic and social dependency, our option as a matter of policy has to be a "moratorium" on external assistance in money and personnel. We recommend this option as the only potent means of becoming truly and authentically ourselves while remaining a respected and responsible part of the Universal Church.³⁹

The different member churches of AACC understood and interpreted the moratorium in various ways. The Methodist church in Kenya understood it to mean Jitegemee (Self-reliance) and planting the Church on Kenyan soil.⁴⁰ The missionaries were not to be sent away but to be invited to share in the abundance of soul-harvesting and to keep the diversified ministry of the Church true to the catholicity

³⁹ Adrian Hastings, African Christianity: An Essay in Interpretation (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1976), 22.

⁴⁰ Nthamburi, 144.

of the Christian Church.⁴¹

In an effort to sell an acceptable concept of the moratorium to the already shocked and retreating Western Churches, the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK) further reinterpreted the moratorium to mean that "the Church in Africa (and generally in the third world) be given time to rethink problems, successes and failures as a way of initiating and developing new strategies for the mission of the Church, without undue pressure. The idea of the 'moratorium' would force the Churches in the developing countries to become less dependent and get started on the road to self-reliance."⁴²

The call for a moratorium was a brave costly decision that left Africans less dependent on the Western Churches, but more or less working together as partners in the Church's mission. It was a clear message to the World that the world-wide Church needed a mission of harambee in which the partners contributed to the Christian common good. In this understanding, Nthamburi observes that the "African Christians have shown a deep love for Christians from other parts of the world, and it is appropriate for the Church in Kenya to continue to invite other Christians from any part

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Nthamburi, 68.

of the world to share in the Church's ongoing evangelisation."⁴³

Summary

This chapter has discussed PCEA's weak vision in regard to community intactness and ecological awareness. If PCEA is diagnosed as a commercial religious institution because it was begun by businessmen, the diagnosis may be faulty and ineffective. But if it is diagnosed as a complex, ambiguous, and religious entity, the Presbyterian Church of East Africa will be seen to have accomplished much in a difficult world.

What PCEA needs in the twenty-first century is a more contextualized and daring vision of shalom in order to meet the diverse needs of modern Kenyan society. The new vision of shalom will center around a gospel and an education that raises communal and environmental awareness. There is no guarantee for the success of a Church that cannot improve the odds in human relationships and the way those human relationships connect with the rest of God's creation.

The Church's philosophy of self-reliance cannot be creative and effective unless it includes healing of violated human relationships as well as stewardship for the hurting creation. The Church and society must "try to work

⁴³ Nthamburi, 145.

together in harmony for the political, economic and social development of the nation guided by the spirit of harambee and the philosophy of peace, love and unity."“

“ Church Women United, A Service of Worship for World Day of Prayer, "On the Journey Together," 1 March 1991, p. 4.

CHAPTER 4

PCEA and Education

The Presbyterian Church of East Africa is like a bird in the jungle, alive and crying for education in schools, colleges, universities, churches and seminaries. The Church sees the country for what it is--an arena of education. This chapter describes the missionary approach to cross-cultural education, discusses its impact on African society, examines the African responses, and recommends education for usalama.

Missionary Education

The missionary education sought the conversion of the Africans to "read the Bible, learn catechism, understand the content of Christian religion"¹ and imitate westerners. It had its own curricula, syllabi and objectives that tended to create cleavage between Christians and the so-called pagans.²

The missionaries used impressive polite terms such as modern, civilized, improvement, betterment, and the passing

¹ Nthamburi, 89.

² National Council of Churches of Kenya, "Church and Development," Nairobi, 1976, p. 7.

on of what was worthwhile to those who became committed to it.³ They considered sound education as character development based on religion for a sound home life and recreation, hygiene and health, agriculture and industry.⁴

The African pastors wore the Geneva gown, western collar, and copied the habit of wearing the ties, rosebuds or carnations.⁵ Africans were subject to the absolutized missionary education which left no allowance for the possible rightness or validity of the African educational systems.

In a naive way, the missionaries thought they possessed an education system that came from God, was superior and best in the world. The Africans were brainwashed and intimidated to the extent that some Africans took on a new monocultural perspective of rejecting and disregarding African traditional education.

Missionary education produced clerks, office messengers, teachers, instructors, servants and other workers for a colonial economy. It reduced Africans to actual dependency rather than self-reliance. The

³ S. R. Peters, Ethics and Education (London: Scott, Foresman, 1967), 20-21.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ngugi wa Thiong'o, A Writer's Prison Diary (London: Heinemann, 1981), 57.

missionary education was so inefficient that the African continent

appears essentially as a land of domination and exploitation, quartered, torn apart, divided, atomized, trampled under foot. It is the land where frequently the people have no dignity, no rights, and no hope. These challenges are becoming more intolerable, considering that natural catastrophes--which are desperately repeated--are added to evils caused by human mischief and injustice.⁶

Yet, the missionary education emphasized hard work, progress and character! The writer's missionary Chogoria High School motto read, Thiaga Mbere na Kivo (Make Progress by Hard Work). It was education for hard work, competition, athletics, debates and progress for personal achievement and character. A clear illustration is the writer's Thigaa Primary School motto: "If property is lost nothing is lost. If health is lost something is lost. If character is lost everything is lost."⁷

Mwalimu Nabea, desired to develop hard-working men and women. As part of his lesson, Nabea resorted to singing when his students attention span was low: Ii ntinkiraiiii. Maika jakithimwa nkaanda ikingi. The closest translation

⁶ K. C. Abraham, ed., Third World Theologies: Commonalities and Divergencies (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1990), 28.

⁷ Nabea Bururia, headmaster of Thigaa Primary School, 1966. Nabea is the teacher who influenced my early education more than anyone I remember today.

would be "I wish I knew, I would insert my poles, while others sowed theirs, as the acres were being demarcated."

Nabea wanted to motivate his students with the highest value of their culture--land. In Meru culture, the kithaka (beautiful) gave people more status and value than gold, silver or money did. But education was diverted from kithaka to hard work for status in society. A visiting District Officer (DO) once posed the question, "Why do you go to school?" The answers included, to be taught, to read, to write and to learn. The District Officer's answer to his own question was, "We go to school to get a place, a position in the Kenyan society."

What did the DO mean? Did he mean the education that has led to so many unemployed primary school, high school, college and university graduates? He advised students to work hard for status or position in society. This idea of hard work is what Max Weber terms the Protestant ethic, "a disciplined, moral commitment to regular, conscientious work and deferred gratification."⁸

Weber maintained that Protestant Puritanism, especially Calvinism, was responsible for the spirit of modern capitalism. The concepts of money and hard work were highly valued for their own sake. The spending of money on idle

⁸ Ian Robertson, Sociology, 3rd ed. (New York: Worth Publ., 1987), 405.

luxury was considered disreputable. Instead, the capital was to be reinvested to earn yet more capital.⁹

Weber argued that Calvinists looked for "signs" that they were among the chosen--and they took worldly success as just such a sign. The more successful they were, the more likely it seemed that they were destined for heaven.¹⁰ Ironically, the very people who rejected material comforts unwittingly created industrial capitalism, the foundation of modern affluence. Industrialism in turn encouraged the rational, scientific world view, which undermined traditional religion.¹¹

While the reformers, or rather the Calvinists, tended to lean towards capitalism, the Catholics stressed rewards in heaven and so the worldly lot is not so important. The Hindus threatened reincarnation to a lower kind of life to any one who tried to get into the higher caste status. Buddhism was far removed from worldly treasures as it emphasized mysticism. Confucianism stressed a static condition of social structures as part of the natural order. Islam was activist but did not emphasize thrift and hard

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid., 406.

work.¹² Presbyterian Calvinism definitely emphasized hard work only to introduce limited efficiency rather than sufficiency.

The World Book Dictionary¹³ defines the word efficiency as the ability to do things without waste of time or energy. Efficiency is getting the most of what one needs. Missionary education falls short of efficiency because a lot of Kenyan Africans hung around shopping centers jobless, passing time (or killing time) and cannot get the most of what they need.

Efficiency can only be achieved in the free market where some people may be hurt by unjust competition. Efficiency means producing and supplying whatever there is a demand for, even if the market demands making people slaves. If people's tastes and needs for money are all that matters, then people can be expected to act in an immoral and selfish manner. Education for efficiency and sufficiency is needed in Kenya.

The World Book Dictionary¹⁴ defines sufficiency as:

¹² Ibid.

¹³ "Efficiency," World Book Dictionary, eds. Thorndike Barnhart and Robert K. Barnhart (Chicago: World Book Inc., 1988), 672.

¹⁴ "Sufficiency," World Book Dictionary, eds. Thorndike Barnhart and Robert K. Barnhart (Chicago: World Book Inc., 1988), 2093.

"1. a sufficient amount, large enough supply; 2. adequacy, ability, competence, capability; 3. self-confidence; 4. an income or means adequate for living in a (specified) manner." The missionary education neither produced better African communities nor reliable African economies that were large enough, adequate, self-confident and capable of bringing enough income to Africa. The gap between the very rich and the very poor is enormous. In the words of US Pastoral letter on Catholic Social teaching,

Our faith calls us to measure this economy, not only by what it produces, but also by how it touches human life and whether it protects or undermines the dignity of the human person. Economic decisions have human consequences and moral content; they help or hurt people, strengthen or weaken family life, advance or diminish the quality of justice in our land.¹⁵

Christians are called upon to "use the resources of our faith, the strength of our economy, and the opportunities of our democracy to shape a society that better protects the dignity and basic rights of our sisters and brothers, both in this land and around the world."¹⁶ Kenya has two million

¹⁵ National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Economic Justice for All (Washington, D.C.: Design Network, 1986, v.

¹⁶ Ibid.

destitutes.¹⁷ "The number of frustrated youth, frustrated through joblessness or through being drop-outs of an elitist education system, is increasing. Women are very much among the exploited categories. Alcoholics and the handicapped also figure largely among the impoverished strata of the population."¹⁸

Traditional African education was holistically created communities without the extremes of the rich and the poor, the landless, homeless, destitutes, delinquents, widows, orphans, unemployed or statusless. Two good examples are the Kikuyu and the Luo African traditional forms of education.

The Kikuyu Traditional African Education

The Kikuyu African education was participatory for men and women in an endeavour to transform their world.¹⁹ It was a thing of excitement and involvement in a real world of a real community, not in any way divorced from everyday life or escapist of the real issues of life. Sometimes people escape into gnosticism, mysticism, an artificial world, a

¹⁷ A. Shorter, J. M. Walligo, A. Amewogo, A. Bellagamba, D. Kyeyune, Kabazzi-Kisirinya, J. Kariuki, and A. Ndeukoya, Towards African Christian Maturity, Chiea Extension Programme (Karen-Nairobi: St. Paul Publications, 1987), 55.

¹⁸ Ibid., 57.

¹⁹ Ibid., 194.

doctrinal seminary world, or the university world. The Kikuyu had the community as the school, the laboratory, the seminary and the university for life education. Jomo Kenyatta states: "Education begins at the time of birth and ends with death. The child has to pass various stages of age-groupings with a system of education defined for every status in life."²⁰

As babies, Kikuyu children were educated in the loving arms of their mothers through the medium of lullabies, songs, sweet melodies, rhythms and lessons. When they grew older, they held games, danced, sung, told stories together. They freely imitated the adults, similar to an apprenticeship or discipleship, or the harambee (cooperation) between the adults and the children.²¹

The Kikuyu children went to the garden to learn agriculture, and to the forests to learn biological names and utilitarian purposes of various plants, flowers, fruits and roots. Some were edible, others were poisonous and others were used for medicine.

The boys learned by apprenticeship from their fathers whose occupations were anything ranging from prophets, seers, heroes, leaders, doctors, herbalists, bee-keepers,

²⁰ Jomo Kenyatta, Facing Mount Kenya (1938; reprint, Nairobi: Heinemann Educational Books, 1975), 61.

²¹ Ibid., 61.

hunters, wood-carvers to the smiths. Along with these lessons, the boys learned all about maintaining peace, love, and unity between themselves and their families, their clans, and their communities. The boys also joined their fathers in legal cases as witnesses so that they were educated in the issues of justice and mercy.

The mothers were more or less co-educators as they taught both the boys and the girls the customs, laws and taboos governing their sexuality and harmony of the community. The method of teaching was in the form of folklore, legends, puzzles and very moving, captive riddles before and after the evening meals.

The youth entered the most important stage of all between the ages of twelve and twenty when they were circumcised and recognized as full members of society, eligible for dancing competitions, property ownership and marriage. They were emphatically taught how to bear pain and misfortunes, how to do courtship, who was right to marry, how to respect the elders and the members of the community, how to serve the poor, the weak, the elderly and the sick. The youth were responsible to the community and were accountable to the family, clan, community and the whole creation of God.²²

²² Ibid., 68.

After marriage, the men joined the Kamatimo, that is, became the assistants to the elders and judges in the Kikuyu courts (Kiama kia matathi)--not to deliver judgements but to listen and learn about the Kikuyu law and justice. The eldest members of the Kiama kia matathi formed the inner cabinet, usually known as Kiama kia maturanguru. These are the elders who conducted the ntuiko ceremony which handed over the reigns of power to the succeeding generation.

A vast majority of western-educated post-colonial Africans have created a situation of conflict by a lack of traditional wisdom that makes them cling to power until death do part them. After the Africans sell away their traditional wisdom and values, they sorrowfully regret introducing dictatorial, inhuman and oppressive, foreign, political and educational values of control. "The spider said of man: they have no eyes, since they will get caught in my web."²³ The Africans are lamentably caught up in the political, economic and social cultural web.

Education Models in Kikuyu Traditions

The traditional Kikuyu children were taught well and they learned well by doing, behaving, feeling and thinking. The children picked up values, ideas, information,

²³ Ochola-Ayayo, Traditional Ideology and Ethics Among the Southern Luo (Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1976), 85.

intellectual and social skills from participating in the society and in their environment. As the children got involved in society, they learned how to express themselves, acquire ideas, skills, values and ways of thinking. They understood their social world as they played, created models of behavior, learned survival tactics and looked forward to a bright future in the community.

Kikuyu babies start learning right from their mothers' hands in which case the baby is at the center of learning, receiving gentle, non-directive lessons from the mother. The baby learns the mother tongue and cultural traits of the mother as well as the society in which she or he was born.

The learning social system of a Kikuyu child has a great capacity for change. It requires the mother to assume the role of a reflector and a facilitator. It is essential the mother, or the nurse, or the guardian, understands with the baby and not merely about the baby.

Bruce Joyce and Marsha Weil refer to this method as the nondirective teaching model. But they use the model for a teacher-student relationship rather than for a mother-baby relationship. The goals and the assumptions of the model are

to assist students in attaining greater personal integration, effectiveness, and realistic appraisal. A related goal is to create a

learning environment conducive to the process of stimulating, examining and evaluating new perceptions.²⁴

In the nondirective model, the teacher looks ahead and shapes the events. While a series of unpredictable responses may occur in counseling, the teacher controls a teaching strategy even where the activities are broad, sequential and distinct from one another.²⁵ The model requires that teachers increase their sensitivity to others, practice responding to students and making contacts with them, and master the nondirective skills.²⁶ It helps the student in a learning situation and encourages free expression of feelings. The teacher clarifies problems, feelings, possible decisions and supports the student.

In the Kikuyu traditional setting, the model is cooperative (sort of harambee)--learning within the family and the society. Joyce and Weil describe the cooperative learning as the model for building education through the democratic process.²⁷ Herbert Thelen supports the view from a social point perspective.

²⁴ Joyce Bruce, and Marsha Weil, Models of Teaching, 3rd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1986), 144.

²⁵ Ibid., 150.

²⁶ Ibid., 157.

²⁷ Ibid., 215.

Thelen begins with the concept of a social being: "A man (woman) who builds with other men (women) the rules and agreements that constitute social reality."²⁸ Human beings lead a social life which involves friendships, conflicts and social agreements as relates to religion, politics, economics, sciences and all that constitutes the human culture. Thelen views this as negotiation and renegotiation which is the essence of social process:

Thus in groups and societies a cyclical process exists: individuals, interdependently seeking to meet their needs, must establish a social order (and in process they develop groups and societies.) The social order determines in varying degrees what ideas, values and actions are possible, valid and "appropriate"! Working within these "rules" and stimulated by the need for rules the culture develops. The individual studies his reaction to the rules and re-interprets them to discover their meaning for the way of life he seeks. Through this quest, he changes his own way of life, and this in turn influences the way of life of others. But as the way of life changes, the rules must be revised, and new controls and agreements have to be hammered out and incorporated into the social order.²⁹

The social system assumes an open classroom atmosphere in which the role of the teacher becomes that of the friendly critic, a counselor and a consultant. Following the principles of reaction, the teacher reflectively guides the students as follows: The problem solving or task level

²⁸ Thelen Herbert, Education and the Human Quest (New York: Harper and Row, 1960), 80.

²⁹ Ibid., 228-29.

(What is the nature of the problem? What are the factors involved?); the group management level (What information do we need now? How can we organize ourselves to get it?); and the level of individual meaning (How do you feel about these conclusions? What would you do differently as a result of knowing about...?) The student activity is very important in this model of learning and teaching. Without having to impose anything upon the students, the instructor facilitates, regulates, and supervises the process of education. Unless the group seriously bogs down, the instructor should not intervene.³⁰

The whole support system enables the students and the teachers to explore problems together, react, organize solutions, progress and process together. Joyce and Weil observe that "Authentic exchanges are essential. Atmosphere is one of reason and negotiation."³¹ In the Kikuyu and the Luo learning atmospheres, the teacher functions as a facilitator as well as an education counselor.

The Luo Traditional African Education

The Luo Africans of Kenya conducted most of their education in the siwindhi (dormitory for boys and girls between the ages seven and fourteen). After this age, the

³⁰ Thelen Herbert, Dynamics of Groups at Work (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954), 52-53.

³¹ Bruce and Weil, 238.

girls continued their education in the siwindhi but the boys joined the simba (boys dormitory) and later the duol (men's dormitory). It was in the simba and the duol that the male members of the community learned the Luo attitudes, beliefs and values. The siwindhi was "the institution for cultural tradition and social preparation."³²

The education in the Siwindhi was mainly composed of riddles, proverbs and folk stories. After each story, all would say, Tinda adong adong arom gi nera! which means, "Amen I shall grow tall, as tall as my uncle."³³ One such story is about the spider and the rabbit who were great friends. The spider asked the rabbit to go with him to visit his parents-in-law at their premises in heaven. The rabbit agreed on condition that they were going to look civilized and observe the rules of the table manners. The rabbit advised the spider that he was the chief guest and if they said, "Let us take food to oche" (brother-in-law), that food would be the spider's." But if they said, "Let us take food to welo" (guests), that food would be the rabbit's.

The rabbit knew very well that the rules of good conduct required the people in the heavens to take food to

³² M. E. G. Ogutu-obunga, "The Ideas of Time and History With Special Reference to the Luo of Kenya," Kenya Historical Review 2, no. 1 (1974): 25.

³³ Ogutu-obunga, 73.

the guests but not to the brother-in-law. So, whenever the food was brought in, it was for the guests and the rabbit selfishly feasted on it. The spider did not eat anything for three days and his heavenly in-laws inquired why their chief guest was not eating. The spider narrated the whole story of the table rules. The table rules changed and the in-laws began bringing food to the brother-in-law.

The rabbit became so hungry that he decided to return to the earth as soon as he could. But he did not have the ladder since they had used the spider's cobweb to get to heaven. The rabbit decided to jump to the earth and he came down so fast for so many miles and with so much force that by the time he landed upon the earth, he was already a dry piece of meat.³⁴

The maxim in the above story is that it is immoral to be selfish, cunning and to lose one's integrity before friends, neighbors, and the nations of the earth. To be generous is a great virtue in Africa. One cannot be said to be educated, no matter how many academic degrees one carries behind one's name, without being a respectable, hospitable, and sociable member of the community.

Siwindhi and Duol Role Model

For appropriate roles in the community, the girls

³⁴ Ibid., 78-79.

received their instruction in the siwindhi and the boys received theirs in the duol. In terms of studying social behavior and values, Joyce and Weil call the model role playing.

On its simplest level, role playing is dealing with problems through action; a problem is delineated, acted out, and discussed. Some students are role players; others observe. A person puts himself or herself in the position of another person and then tries to interact with others who are also playing roles. As empathy, sympathy, anger, and affection are all generated during the interaction, role playing, if done well becomes a part of life.³⁵

The role playing in a formal classroom is not the same as that in a siwindhi or duol. But both the classroom and the siwindhi role playing are experiential. The model of role playing involves the feelings, the development of values and attitudes. This kind of learning is described by Zablun Nthamburi as the process of education that was unconscious and utilitarian--an oral "handing down" of the arts, the folklore, the traditions and the myths of the community.³⁶ It was a thread that held the community together and a method of incalculating the moral values of the community that maintained the wellbeing and the wholeness of the community.

The Luo community was very imaginative and creative.

³⁵ Bruce and Weil, 242.

³⁶ Nthamburi, 90.

They taught their kids in stories, proverbs and myths, just like many other communities in the world. C. S. Song, writing from an Asian background, says that through stories and fairy tales,

a communion of hearts and minds was created between us and our children. And what a rich communication it proved to be! Nor was it confirmed merely to our family. The stories that fascinated them opened their little minds to the big world inhabited by humans, animals, and fairies, enabled to come into touch with the ancient past, and to feel the unborn future.³⁷

Song believes that stories portray a puzzled world, culturally, spiritually, politically and economically. The stories of despair and hope, doubt and faith, bewildering riddles of life, and the evil unjust forces of the world account for the search for the moral power, for shalom, that will enable persons to live in the world.³⁸ There is power and healing in African traditional education. It is this power that gave Africans the impetus to challenge the missionaries.

African Response to Western Missionary Education

The missionary education was not a harambee (cooperation) effort, a role-playing model or a continuity and change model. The Western education was imposed upon

³⁷ C. S. Song, Tell Us Our Names (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1987), ix.

³⁸ Ibid.

Africans in order to enculturate the Africans to value change and to despise traditional education. The missionaries alienated their students from the communities and made them strangers to their own kith and kin by making them captives in the missionary boarding schools.

Western education was geared towards individual achievement, western economic values, progress and enlightenment rather than the dignity of the community and the integrity of creation. A literate person was regarded as civilized, cultured, and even Christian. "Christian" was synonymous with a "scholar" muthomi. Missionary education made Africans aware of their servitude positions in the society. But many Africans were not ready for servitude.

The Kikuyu, for example, started their own forty eight Karinga (Independent) Schools and six Karinga churches between the years 1929-1933.³⁷ The highly relevant and well-organized Karinga Schools were not only a challenge to the missionaries to appreciate African culture and to recognize African determination to realize their own lives.

The Karinga Schools prospered without asking the missionary's advice on how best to organize and manage their work. Africans no longer trusted the missionaries, viewing

³⁷ Church of Scotland Mission, "Collected Letters of Scottish Missionaries at Kikuyu Church of Scotland from 1907-1958," Edinburgh CSM Office, Kikuyu News [Nairobi], no. 102, 1928 n. p.

them as exploitive as the settlers. "There is no difference between a white settler and a missionary, they are both Europeans."⁴⁰

The Kikuyu teachers resigned from the missionary schools and took up teaching jobs with the African Independent Karinga Schools.⁴¹ The Karinga Schools emphasized the teaching of the English Language and a wide knowledge of mathematics which the Kikuyu regarded as most important for their future development. They followed a curriculum of their own devising and issued their own certificates of competency. But for the 20 years the Karinga independent African education impacted the community, the missionaries ignored and criticized it for low standards as a means of entry to higher education or industrial employment.

Karinga education was against colonial social injustice and the discontinuity of African culture. The Kikuyu wanted to assure enough continuity of "vision, value, and perception" so as to sustain their self-identity as a community. They also wanted enough freedom and novelty for survival as a community that went through new

⁴⁰ Thiong'o, 87.

⁴¹ J. Anderson, The Struggle for Education (London: Longman, 1970), 177.

circumstances."⁴² They wanted to rally together as a community with a cultural continuity which enabled "persons to act in moral and ethical ways in the public and practical arenas of life."⁴³ They were threatened by the missionary lack of love and justice.

The missionaries were afraid that the teaching of academic disciplines and English language would promote a potential danger and create difficulties in the process of an oppressive social and cultural change. Even in the Divinity School, an institution designed to teach African church leadership, the widespread dissemination of English language was abandoned and the principal of the Divinity School was most unwilling to teach or even address his students in English. By 1910, the principal observed, "I have taught in this medium (Swahili) for fifteen years and they need no better."⁴⁴

The missionaries argued that English would expose immature African Christians to oceans of doubtful and vile literature, promote a spirit of self-advancement, pose

⁴² Walter Brueggemann, The Creative Word (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989), 1.

⁴³ Allen J. Moore, "A Social Theory of Religious Education," in Religious Education As Social Transformation, ed. Allen J. Moore (Birmingham: Religious Education Press, 1989), 34.

⁴⁴ Church Missionary Society, "Report of Education Sub-Committee."

sexual dangers to European women, cause political dangers to the colonial state and harm the spiritual life of the church.⁴⁵ The missionaries were critical of their own European culture and were reluctant to have the Africans get access to the full range of western culture and modern opportunities.

The Africans rejected the absolute missionary control and insisted on sharing in the decisions regarding the pace, extent and direction of their own cultural change. Africans wanted a cultural transformation for justice and nothing less.⁴⁶ Some justice was only possible when the "mission and government schools ran side by side with the African Independent schools."⁴⁷ Nthamburi concludes that aringa schools became the "breeding ground for nationalist agitation."⁴⁸ They contributed to justice and national course for independence.

Church and Education in the Politically Independent Kenya

Kenya is a pluralistic and multiracial nation that won

⁴⁵ Rogers letter to Manley, 16 October 1919, Church Missionary Society, London, England, CMS/1919/87, n. p.

⁴⁶ Thomas P. Penton, ed., Education For Justice (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1975), 54.

⁴⁷ Nthamburi, 97.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

independence from Great Britain in 1963.⁴⁹ The new African government sought a reconciliation among Africans, Europeans, and Indians based on the basis of nation-building, improvement of the people's welfare and the promotion of peace, love and unity.⁵⁰ The Ominde commission was set up in 1964 to review the country's education system and to relieve the Churches of their remaining responsibilities for the management of maintained schools.⁵¹

The children of Kenya could now get equal educational opportunities regardless of their religious, cultural, racial and class backgrounds. In the case of the acceptance of the female students, no medical examination was necessary anymore to check as to whether they were circumcised (clitoridectomized). Thus, the church missionary education ceased to be the special privilege of the Europeans and a few African elites.

The PCEA took a long time before letting go of the schools which were under private Church Committees.⁵² The PCEA then sent a hot memorandum to the Government outlining

⁴⁹ Moi, 5.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Anderson, 145.

⁵² Prebyterian Church of East Africa, General Administrative Committee, "Christian Education Report," [Nairobi] 10-15 April 1975, n. p.

the following issues:

(a) The Church has a divine mandate to teach all men and women and has inalienable rights in the education of her children. She is concerned not only with the faith and the morals, but also with the whole of man's life, since all human actions have an inevitable bearing on God's purpose for men and women. By its native mission, the church is committed to education as the search for truth and the process by which man comes to maturity and responsible participation in society.

(b) That the Church recognizes the State, under God, has a responsibility to ensure that adequate facilities are provided for the education of all its children and its young people and to all its citizens.

(c) Now that the task of building a nation is being undertaken by the government of the people themselves, the P.C.E.A. Church as a voluntary organization of citizens, wishes to make their maximum contribution. It would work for the mutual understanding and unity within the national system of public schools, respecting of a non-Christian parent, as the state takes over more and more responsibilities for the administration of Schools, the position of the Church in education must be safe-guarded to ensure that it can carry out its divine commission and give service of the highest quality. When the people so wish, the resources of the churches should be used for school management.

(d) In Kenya today, an educational system closely adapted to the changed circumstances and needs of the country must be worked out, such a system would take into account the best traditions of the people. With all this the Church is in complete sympathy and pledges the fullest co-operation. Its concern is that the full religious developement of the Church's children be assured. The PCEA was convinced that an educational system without religion can bring only disaster, whereas

a system with religious foundations will be the greatest assurance of the wellbeing of the country.³³

The government appointed another commission in 1968 to scrutinize the participation of the Churches in the educational system. But the Mau Mau freedom fighters wanted the Churches to have no sponsorship or authority over the schools. Moreover, they demanded the PCEA return to them the Karinga schools which were closed down by the colonial government and their sites consequently occupied by the PCEA. In view of the ongoing politiking, the commission apparently disregarded a major portion of the PCEA's memorandum. The summarized report was as follows:

(I) Where a transferred School was managed by a Church or an organization of Churches, and it is the wish of the community served by the school that the religious traditions of the school should be respected, the former manager shall be appointed by the local authority to serve as the sponsor of the school.

(II) The sponsor shall have the right to the school buildings free of charge when the buildings are not in use for school purpose.

(III) Religious instructions shall be given at the school in conformity with a syllabus prepared or approved under regulations made under section (9 of this act) after consultation with the sponsor.³⁴

³³ Barrett, 54.

³⁴ Kenya, Ministry of Education, an extract from the Ominde Commission Report, Nairobi, 1968, n. p.

This tends to disassociate the religious teaching in the schools from the objective of the Churches although freedom of worship was assured for all the students in Kenya's schools.

If the parents of a pupil at a public school request that the pupil be wholly or partly excused from attending religious worship or religious instruction in the school, the pupil shall be excused such attendance until the request is withdrawn.³⁵

The Kenya Government has to be commended for allowing the influence of the Churches in the educational system.³⁶ By 1979, the PCEA sponsored Schools were as follows:³⁷

PCEA Sponsored Educational Institutions 1978-79

Primary Education Vocational	Secondary	Teacher Education Education	Trade Training	Higher
Schools	275	155	1	2-
Students	192,546	36,800	740	410-
Teachers	4,125	1,036	20	24-

In the 1964 and 1968 commissions education was considered very important for national development and so

³⁵ Kenya, Ministry of Education, Education Act, Nairobi, 1968, n. p.

³⁶ E. Stabler, Education after Uhuru: The Schools of Kenya (London: Wesleyan University Press, 1969), 98.

³⁷ Presbyterian Church of East Africa, General Assembly, "Christian Education Document 8," Kikuyu, Kenya, 14-20 April 1979, n. p.

the curriculum had to be changed so that it could appropriately express the aspirations and cultural values of independent Kenya. The Kenya government patterned the teaching of religious education in schools using another foreign framework of the Education Act that was passed in England in 1944. The act allowed religious worship and teaching on the school premises except during the class-time for a maximum of two school periods a week, for the children of parents who desired it.³⁸ Religious education in schools became voluntary to such a degree that the Churches and the participants attended freely.

However, the contribution of churches towards teachers of religious education in schools is enormous.³⁹ As the Churches work hand in hand with the Government in religious education and chaplaincy,⁴⁰ they become part of a social climate that provides stability in a situation where things are in disequilibrium due to the rapid social changes. Without proper religious and moral support,⁴¹ there cannot be usalama. Education for usalama is needed at all the

³⁸ H. C. Dent, The Educational Systems of England and Wales (London: University of London Press, 1966), 32.

³⁹ Barrett, 52.

⁴⁰ National Council of Churches of Kenya, Target [newspaper], no. 327, 16 November 1980, n. p.

⁴¹ National Council of Churches of Kenya, Target [newspaper], no. 334, 7 March 1981, n. p.

echalons of learning, including adult, theological and university studies.

University Education

The universities in Kenya have suffered due to economic and political instabilities that began in the early 1970s. The detention of university professors without trial in the name of national security; the so-called brain drain due to students who go abroad and never return home because they consider their skills will not be very useful at home; and the corruption in finances deprives the universities of good education, teachers, books and proper diets.

Usalama is essential in most African universities due to a physical collapse and a brain drain fueled by ludicrously low salaries and political unrest. "Government hostility, donor neglect and decades of mismanagement and inept planning are making them crumble."⁴² The corruption in the universities and the meager pay "forces professors to take menial jobs in order to survive."⁴³ Some of them become taxi drivers and go to class unprepared to teach.

Whenever the students raise questions or demonstrate against the conditions in the universities, the authorities order the institutions closed indefinitely. Universities

⁴² "In Africa, It's Lower Education," Los Angeles Times, 29 May 1990, A10.

⁴³ Ibid., A12.

have been ordered closed down not only in Kenya but in Nigeria, Uganda, Ivory Coast, Tanzania, Ghana, Senegal and Sudan between December 1989 and May 1990.⁴⁴ In Kenya, the leadership of the Churches tends to neglect the declining standards in the institutions of higher learning.

In spite of the falling secular university standards, some Churches such as the Methodist Church in Kenya and the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, are establishing or planning to construct Church universities. There is no guarantee that the secular political influences will not interfere with the freedom of expression, selection of students, appointment of professors and the maintenance of the academic, spiritual and physical standards of the Church university life.

The Church universities ought to strive hard not to depend on the Western or Eastern Churches for academic, economic and personnel development. The present decline in the standards of African universities has been mainly due to unrealistic dependence on the westerners who advised and helped build African universities that would depend on the western donations and expertise for their survival and wellbeing.

The Church universities should not only equip students

⁴⁴ Ibid.

with skills and concepts but give them a continuing life time motivation for the willingness to be a people of usalama--as highly trained people, professionals in agriculture, medicine, theology and education. No university wants to develop mediocre students who do not love wholeness, peace, and harmony for the creation and the society.

The universities will, therefore, do well to create a curriculum that envisages the appropriateness of the humanities and the sciences for the welfare of the community and the creation. These disciplines ought to work in harambee to foster usalama in the areas of computer, auto and aircraft, metal and plastics, home and workplace construction, medical and social services technologies.

Any education seeking usalama will dialogue with such issues as are enlisted by the WCC Vancouver report: continuing destruction of creation, the rich growing richer at the expense of the poor, and the lethal arms race; immense power in the hands of a few people, worshipping the idols of power, and saying God has nothing to do with politics and the survival of creation; realizing that power can come from the powerlessness, if people unite together in one spirit with a vision of courage and guidance for

action.⁶⁵

If the universities have a vision for usalama, they must consistently ask: With whom are we sharing a harambee of actions, academics, and research? Paul and Antonio point out that for the translation of the vision into social practical action, the question to ask is not "for" whom or "on" whom but "with" whom to create the vision of a society in which a minority does not exploit the majority. Will the vision for universities have sufficient freedom for asking questions as a common, daily activity?⁶⁶

The concept of a vision is not only based on the natural dreams defined as "Trains of fantastic images,"⁶⁷ but on biblical understanding of God as one who communicates with humanity through visions (Ps. 89:19; Prov. 29:18; Amos 8:11-12; Hosea 12:10). Visions are characteristic of the most saintly and exalted people (1 Sam. 3:1; Jer. 1:11; Ezek. 1:1; Dan. 2:19; Acts 9:10; 10:3; 16:19).

The visions sometimes come out of the daily contacts with life. Thus Isaiah's vision of the Seraphims (6:2), was

⁶⁵ Ulrich Duchrow and Gehard Liedke, Shalom: Biblical Perspectives on Creation, Justice and Peace (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1989), 9-10.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 54-62.

⁶⁷ Charles M. Stuart, "Vision," The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, ed. James Orr (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952), 3057.

influenced by the familiar decorations of the temple of Jerusalem. Paul's man of Macedonia (Acts 16:9), originated from some poor helot whom Paul had seen on the streets of Troas and who embodied for him the pitiful misery of the regions across the sea. And "Jacob's ladder" (Gen. 28:12) was but a fanciful development of the terraced land which Jacob saw sun-glorified before him as he went to sleep.

In certain aspects, the vision was for immediate direction as in the case of Abraham (Gen. 15:2), Lot (Gen. 19:15), Balaam (Num. 22:22), and Peter (Acts 12:7). In other aspects, it dealt with the moral ideals of the people. Such are the prophetic visions of Isaiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, and Micah, and the apocalypses of Daniel and John. The revelation for immediate direction has many correspondences in the life of the devout in all ages.

The prophetic vision, dealing in a penetrating way with the sources of national growth and decay, has its nearest approach in the deliverances of publicists and statesmen who are persuaded that the laws of God, as expressed in self-control, truth, justice and brotherly love, are supreme. The nations which disregard them are marked for speedy and ultimate extinction.

From the nature of the vision as an instrument of divine communication, the seeing of visions is usually associated with revivals of religion (Ezek. 12:21-25; Joel

2:28). The absence of visions lead to spiritual decline (Isa. 29:11, 12; Lam. 2:9; Ezek. 7:26 and Micah 3:6).

In the history of Israel, the outstanding people like Abraham, Moses, Jacob, David, Isaiah, Jesus and Paul had a vision. They were leaders of action whose work was helped rather than hindered by the visionary aspect of their fellowship with God. Psychologists find that human beings are prevaillingly and persistently doing, knowing, thinking, imagining and remembering in terms of vision. Leaders ought to have fantastic visions for the welfare of the society and creation.

For always the vision emphasizes the play of a spiritual world; the response of a man's spirit to the appeal of that world; and the ordering of both worlds by an intellingent and compelling Power able to communicate himself to man and apparently supremely interested in the welfare of humanity. Such a vision is best presented in the words of Rowthorn who boldly declares:

It is time to consider that the most religious response to the gracious call of God may be to serve where the creation most needs repair, reform, and renewal. We need Christians who will regard sevice in these areas as Christian vocation. And we need to consinder that the most respected Christian vocation might not be a missionary in a poverty stricken nation or a highly ranked denominational official or even a Mother Teresa. We need to consinder that the most devoted Christian servants may be politicians who run for political office-in the town, the city, the state, in the nation-who will run and get

elected with the aim of making policies and shaping public opinion that will be good and responsible for all of God's creation.⁶⁸

Rowthorn has in mind academic freedom, openness, and tolerance that will offer promise and hope for usalama in the whole of God's creation. The whole "creation is one, every creature in community with every other, living in harmony and security toward the joy and well-being of every other creature."⁶⁹ This has to happen in every sphere of education.

Adult Education

The PCEA has a very weak vision for adult education. Adults are responsible people who want to succeed by learning about the wholeness of the society and the creation and increasing their competency in life. Wlodkowski suggests that motivation for adult education comes from desire for success plus volition, plus value, plus enjoyment.⁷⁰ The majority of adults seek education for practical, pragmatic reasons such as solving problems, changing careers, earning extra money, improving their position in life, upward career mobility, better job

⁶⁸ Anne Rowthorn, Caring For Creation (Wilton, Conn.: Morehouse Publ., 1989), 138-39.

⁶⁹ Brueggemann, Living Toward A Vision, 15.

⁷⁰ Raymond J. Wlodkowski, Enhancing Adult Motivation to Learn (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1989), 8.

opportunities, and lots of other multiple reasons. Some adults find it hard to learn due to their needs, emotions, impulses, attitudes, expectations, irrationalities, beliefs and values.⁷¹ All in all, adult education is more than just teaching literacy--how to read and write.⁷²

Adult education serves the unschooled as well as the partially, fully schooled and trained humanpower. It teaches men and women by way of seminars, conferences and short courses how to make good use of the resources within their environment. It awakens the conscience of the community to the political, cultural, sociological and economical factors that encourage individualistic, elitist welfare at the expense of the wellbeing of the total society. Its programs can validly challenge the existing contextual issues affecting the welfare of creation and society. It can play the most effective role for social change in both the urban and rural segments of the society.

A Church's vision of adult education is crucial in Kenya where literacy is only 40 percent.⁷³ Literacy is essential not only for reading and writing but for

⁷¹ Ibid., 8-14.

⁷² Wilfred C. Kogo, "The Structures, Organization and Development of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa from 1907-1981," diss., University of Hull, 1981.

⁷³ Mission Yearbook (1987), 304.

certainty, meaning, solidarity, stability and growth in the society. Literacy can be used by churches to change societal values and attitudes.

African Theology and Theological Education

The African theology reflects a renewal and a conscientization of African Churches in the midst of an African political independence.⁷⁴ The African theology has formed its own socio-political milieu⁷⁵ that is no longer presented in western categories.⁷⁶ The All African Conference of Churches (AACC) commended the development of selfhood in the Church in the following areas:⁷⁷ (1) a Christ-centered theology; (2) a thorough knowledge of African culture; (3) a powerful combination of these two resulting in a powerful and authentic African liturgy; (4) an African theology that dialogued with African socialism, capitalism, humanism, and communism; (5) a dialogue with the African independent churches and a curricula of African Universities and theological colleges; and (6) Pan-African theological consultations, including Afro-American

⁷⁴ Muzorewa, 61.

⁷⁵ Kwesi A. Dickson and Paul Ellingworth, eds., Biblical Revelation and African Beliefs (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1971), 16.

⁷⁶ All African Conference of Churches, The Drumbeats from Kampala (London: Lutterworth Press, 1963), 35.

⁷⁷ Muzorewa, 65.

theologians and their theology in search of the Afro-American identity.

In 1974, Appiah Kubi labled the African theology as the "contextual African Biblical theology."⁷⁸ He expressed the need for African theology to be practical, relevant, situational, liberating, activist and dynamic. Appiah's definition came close to that of Aylward Shorter whose definition was "a theology suited to modern national cultures which are essentially poly-ethnic in character, striving to weld together into unity a variety of traditions,...it is pluriform."⁷⁹

John Mbiti defined African theology as a "theological reflection and expression by African Christians."⁸⁰ The reflection was possible from the African experience of Christian faith and the presence of God.

These scholarly African views on African theology are a valuable pioneering contribution to the African Christian religious experience. But they did not specifically focus on the wellbeing of the community living in a healthy

⁷⁸ Appiah Kubi Kofi, "Why African Theology?" All African Conference of Churches Bulletin no. 7, 1974, 6.

⁷⁹ Shorter, 28.

⁸⁰ John Mbiti, "The Biblical Basis for the Present Trends in African Theology," in African Theology en Route, eds. Kofi Appiah-Kubi and Sergio Torres (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1979), 83.

environment. The purpose and focus of usalama theology is to restore, heal and make whole the violated community intactness and the disrupted ecology and sufficiency of African communities. Some of the healing leadership models are in the lives of the brave people of vision.

Lessons From People of Vision

Theology desires to learn from the visions of heroes such as Moses, Kenyatta, Moi, Washington, Du Bois, Malcom X and Martin Luther King, Jr. These men were driven by different but strong liberating visions. Booker Washington believed that for a person to be authentically free, one must be free personally and socially. Washington lived at a time of American sectional bitterness, racial tension and rapid economic growth. His social vision and work for unity, racial co-operation and the uplift of the disadvantaged made him an effective public moralist.⁸¹ Washington's vision was for the healing of the society.

In a similar manner, Du Bois's vision was for the strenuous person, the unreconciled striving African-American who lived in a frustrating, anguishing and hostile American society.⁸² Du Bois's concern was how the Africans could achieve personal wholeness and societal power. He believed

⁸¹ Mbiti, "The Biblical Bases for the Present Trends in African Theology," 41-42.

⁸² Ibid., 44.

in the destruction of racism and the introduction of a rigorous socially transformative scholarship. He challenged Africans to hard work and hard play; to take responsibility for creating strenuous selves capable of transforming an unjust social order. He discouraged a personal ethic of adaptability and subordination to the needs of the dominant society.⁸³ Du Bois had the concept of wholeness which is a very central issue in usalama.

Likewise, Malcom X had such a strong desire to heal the African-Americans from the wounds and hurts of the street life that he turned into a defiant person. Malcom grew up "on the streets" and was well acquainted with the repressed potential of ghetto life and its deprivations, seductive pleasures.⁸⁴ Having diagnosed street life with guile, charm, gusto and wit, Malcom X maintained that authentic liberation could not be achieved by focusing exclusively upon the personal transformation of Africans. "White people must change, along with the entire social order."⁸⁵ Malcom's beliefs on liberation are important in the issues of usalama.

The most remarkable vision was by Martin Luther King,

⁸³ Ibid., 44, 73.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 76.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 102.

Jr. who presented the integrative person rather than the integrated person.⁸⁶ After grieving due to America's horrific racial oppression, King reminded "America of its destiny to become a multi-racial, multi-cultural community of compassion capable of inspiring its global neighbors to practise love through justice and power wielding. In order to do this, it must prove that it is capable of granting the goods of citizenship to nonwhites."⁸⁷ King had a dream for the nation's destiny, a dream inspired by liberal philosophy, biblical evangelical faith, theology, human sciences and his African-American culture.⁸⁸ He was a preacher, a man of vision and a lover of usalama.

The visions of the men mentioned above can be encouraging to the African communities. Their courage and determination can help the African theological schools and Churches to reject⁸⁹ participation in injustice, strife and violence against humanity and creation; to extend love to one's enemies and to offer encouragement to the poor, to apply love to the transformation of power structures,

⁸⁶ Ibid., 105.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 138.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 139.

⁸⁹ Duchrow and Liedke, 173.

starting with the empowerment of the powerless.⁹⁰ This is indeed what the vision of usalama is all about.

Summary

Missionary education failed due to the abrogation in teaching Kenyans that their traditional education was not acceptable. As we have seen, the communities in Kenya such as Kikuyu and Luo had profound traditional education. This recognition leads to a demand for education for usalama--restoration of the human community and their environment.

The missionary enculturation is individualistic, aggressive, assertive, and capitalistic. A theology of usalama may be a good idea to introduce in schools, colleges, seminaries and universities. It is essential for the intactness of the community and its harmonious relationship with the creation.

This chapter points the Church to a more dynamic vision of usalama--the education for the caring of the whole creation. As illustrated by leaders of vision, usalama education holds the promise and the hope for a nation to develop holistically upon the philosophical foundations of the continuous common good, peace, love and unity.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

CHAPTER 5

A Cultural Disruption

Kenya is a country where culture was disrupted by Arabs, missionaries and British colonial masters. These agents of change were not credible and loving human beings. This chapter will attempt to show that they caused unethical disequilibrium in the values and attitudes of the people of Kenya. A vision of usalama may help in the restoration of cultural equilibrium.

Culture

What is culture? Culture is the most important mental map through which reality is experienced and observed. Charles Kraft defines culture as the integrated system of learned behavior patterns, ideas, and products of a society.¹ Culture is the total life way of a people, the social legacy an individual acquires from his group, a people's design for living (Kluckhohn's descriptive definition).² Cultural change in Kenya was so pervasive that it affected the peoples' usalama in their total way of

¹ Charles Kraft, class notes, "Anthropology" (MB520), Fuller Theological Seminary, Fall 1985.

² Ibid.

life. This includes the African first human home, garden and civilization.

Garden Violated

Archaeologists indicate that the gift of human life and ecological garden may have began in East Africa. In 1931, the remains of a creature called proconsul was discovered by Louis Leaky of Kenya, on the Rusinga Island of lake Nyanza. It was dated to be about 25 million years old. There have been six more fossils found at Olduvai suggesting a more advanced Homo habilis, (skillful person). In 1984, two Kenyans, Kamoya Kimeu and Richard Leakey, son of Louis,³ discovered more fossils in Lake Turkana of Kenya, suggesting the existence of the Homo erectus which is close to the Homo sapiens (thinking person or modern person). It appears that East Africa was probably the first home of human beings, the "Garden of Eden" where the first woman and man lived.

Are these archeologists right? If they are, then why is poverty in East Africa, a land that was probably the genesis of humanity? What has gone wrong with the garden that was the primary gene centre (center of origin of cultivated plants) such as cowpea, Kola-nut, sorghum,

³ Mazrui, 41-42.

oilpalm, watermelon, cotton, sesame, castor bean and African rice?⁴

Something very disastrous must have happened to render the garden a place of hunger, poverty and social injustice. The garden was a place of shalom that influenced the making of the Mesopotamian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Nubian, ancient Greek and ancient Roman civilizations via the special blessing of the ancient Egyptian civilization.⁵

The Garden of Eden was planted with "all kinds of trees" that were "pleasing to the eye and good for food"; there were rivers watering and going round the garden; it was a garden with gold, aromatic resin and onyx; the first human couple were married in this garden; they were free to eat from any tree in the garden; they were to work the garden and to take care of it; God visited with them in the garden and they had good times together; there were beasts of the field and birds of the air in the garden; the devil visited the garden also, deceived the first couple, led them to disobedience, ruined their fellowship with God and had them expelled from the garden (Genesis 2, and 3).

The garden of Eden simply means the land, the earth,

⁴ Ibid., 43.

⁵ Ibid., 42.

the natural world, the environment and the biosphere⁶ in which all communities and creatures share together in a spirit of usalama. The concept derives from the biblical times where gardens had paths winding in and out among shade and fruit trees, canals of running water, fountains, sweet-smelling herbs, aromatic blossoms and convenient arbors in which to sit and enjoy peace and tranquility.

These gardens are mentioned in Gen. 2 and 3; 13:10; Eccl. 2, 5:6; Ezek. 28:13; 31:8, 9; 36, 35; and Joel 2:3. The gardens are like the paradise. Dean Freudenberger views the garden of Eden not as the paradise but as a

holy region, where God is present. God planned the garden for us and gave it to us as a gift.

For the Hebrews the gift of land meant that they had entered into a fruitful and just relationship with God and with the land itself--always remembering that the land was God's alone. So the land is a gift to humankind to use, but ultimately the land is God's. The world is given to us, but there are conditions. We have dominion on God's behalf. The land is still God's. IT IS ON LOAN TO US."⁷

To paraphrase Jay B. McDaniel, the garden is loaned to us not only for superindustrial enjoyment of "manufactured fun and adventure"; not only for "'ecotopia' of symbiotic relationships between self, nature, and society"; it is

⁶ Hurman E. Daly and John B. Cobb, Jr., For the Common Good (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989), 252.

⁷ C. Dean Freudenberger, The Gift of Land (Los Angeles: Franciscan Communications, 1981), 10.

certainly not a place for chaos, a "dystopia"--that "socially dysfunctional and biologically dysgenic 'place' that would follow a limited nuclear war"; it is not a gift for "totalitarian"-repression by managerial, technological, and military elites.⁸ The garden is a gift in covenant between the creator and the creation. The garden is the ground of the unity of creation.

God made a covenant with nature, setting the laws for heaven and earth (Gen. 1:11; Jer. 33:20, 25). It is to be respected and kept holy. If it is defiled, profaned and filled with sin, (Lev. 19:29; Num. 35:3; Jer. 2:7; 3:2, 9) the vegetation fades, human beings, animals, birds and the very existence of shalom disappears.

The modern civilizations are, therefore, called to a vision of shalom, to a return to the conditions of the "Garden of Eden" in which justice, usalama and beauty become the order of the day. A development of compassionate relationships is necessary among all the members of the community, including:

all animal life, all human life, all plant life, all oceans and rivers-everything we know, everything we love and hold dear; our friends and families; our reason, our

imaginings, our passions, our pleasures, ourselves; everything. Everything we are and

⁸ Jay B. McDaniel, Earth, Sky, Gods and Mortals (Mystic, Conn.: Twenty-third Publications, 1990), 14-16.

every aspect of God's creation.⁹

The usalama condition of Kenya was disrupted by modernism. Kenya was a garden in which everything was harmoniously interwoven and sacred.

Arab Disruption

The Arabs were the first known outsiders to hurt Africans. They interfered with the African cultures which may have existed along the East Coast as early as A.D. 150.¹⁰ By A.D. 1100, a growing number of Arab Muslim traders had settled on the Indian Ocean coast of what are now Kenya, Mozambique, Somalia, and Tanzania. Over the centuries the original Bantu populations of the Digo, the Giriama, the Miji Kenda and the Pokomo have been supplemented by people from Arabia, Persia, and more recently, from Asia.¹¹

The Arabs were greedy people who emigrated to East Africa due to poverty, lack of resources (economic), political, religious and social reasons such as civil warfare, political despotism, foreign invasions and

⁹ Rowthorn, ix.

¹⁰ Keith David Jones, Faces of Kenya (Norfolk, England: Fakenham Press, 1982), 13.

¹¹ Ibid.

religious sectarianism.¹² The immigrants became farmers, grocers, nomads and butchers who undermined justice by dominating¹³ a thriving sea trade which linked Eastern Africa with China, India, and Indonesia, and with countries bordering the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf.

The East coast ports exported gold, ivory, rhino horns and other products in exchange for such goods as silk, cotton cloth, and porcelain. The trade disturbed the peaceful co-existence between the people and the wild animals by making elephants, rhinos and other animals the objects of killing for ivory, horns and skins business.

Moreover, when Johann Ludwig Krapf landed in Mombasa in 1844, he found the Muslim Swahili and the Arab peoples trading in ivory and slaves. Their Islamic religion of the book was impervious to the Christian gospel¹⁴ and damaging to the African conditions of usalama for approving slavery.

Slave Trade

The business of slavery and slave trade converted "Africans into commodities to be acquired and sold on the world market."¹⁵ The establishment of European colonies in

¹² Cited in Africa: Journal of International African Institute, 59, no. 2 (1989): 186.

¹³ Ibid., 190.

¹⁴ Strayer, 3.

¹⁵ Mazrui, 103.

the New World during the 1500s by the Spaniards and the Portuguese; and in the 1600s by the French, English and the Netherlands, created a fierce competition for slaves. From the 1500s to 1800s, the Europeans shipped about 12 million slaves from Africa to the western hemisphere. Nearly 2 million of these slaves died on the way.¹⁴ On the East African scene, the Arabs sold the Africans to the Europeans, thus undermining the total stability of the continent.

The African communities had to fight each other in order to acquire slaves. The leaders unfairly sold to the Arab merchants any persons they did not like in the community. The Arabs created the impression of business manipulators and oppressors. They did not only sell Africans to European slave traders but oppressed those whom they found along the East African coast, thus, further affecting the usalama of Africa.

Divisions

The most serious factor in exploiting African usalama was the divisions made by the map-makers and the colonialists. Africa had contact with Asia until the Isthmus of the Suez was broken when the Frenchman Ferdinand

¹⁴ "Slavery, Modern Times," World Book Encyclopedia, 24th ed.

de Lesseps created the canal which was opened in 1869.¹⁷
The human-made canal was made to connect Europe with the rest of the world. But it also served to separate the Arabian Peninsula from the rest of Africa.

During the Greek and Roman days, North Africa was regarded as part of the Mediterranean World. There was no Europe in the Greco-Roman period. R. Palmer and Joel Colton agree:

There was really no Europe in ancient times. In the Roman Empire we may see a Mediterranean world, or even a West and an East in the Latin and Greek portions. But the West included parts of Africa as well as of Europe.¹⁸

The European map-makers later tampered with the usalama of the world by drawing artificial boundaries that formed Asia, Africa and Europe, thus making some boundaries more artificial and controversial than others. If the Arabian Peninsula was part of Africa at the time that Judaism, Christianity and Islamic faiths were founded, then it may be concluded that Africa has made contributions to Judaism, Christianity and the Islamic faiths. The holy books, namely the Bible and the Koran indicate plenty of African religious beliefs.

¹⁷ Mazrui, 28.

¹⁸ R. R. Palmer in collaboration with J. Colton, A History of the Modern World, 2nd ed. (New York: Knopf, 1962), 13.

In connection to the Bible, Lorna Bowden wrote in her diary in 1925: "We live in Old Testament times out here in many ways."¹⁹ The biblical impact in Africa is immediately noticed from the African concepts of God as good, merciful, faithful, immortal, almighty, omniscient, omnipotent and invisible; some biblical elements are also observable from the African practice of animal sacrifices for the cleansing and the restoration of the community or for the asking of the rains and the blessings of fertility.²⁰ There were many religious similarities between the Middle East and Africa.

But the division of Africa removed the middle East from the continent with whom they shared a lot in common. The tactics of divide and rule were clearly demonstrated at the Berlin Conference of 1884-85 when the geographical frontier boundaries were set by the Westerners. Colonialism hurt and disrupted the African way of life.

The European attitude toward Africa can be described in the words of the missionary Speke who wrote about Africa claiming:

it has not received the slightest impulse, whether for good or for evil from European civilization...when contemplating these sons of Noah, try to carry our mind back to the time when our poor elder brother Ham was cursed by his father, and condemned to be the slave of both Shem

¹⁹ Strayer, 89.

²⁰ Ibid.

and Japhet; for as they were then, so they appear to be now--a strikingly existing proof of the Holy Scriptures.²¹

The legendary identification of the Africans as the descendants of Canaan, was seized upon as a justification of the European slave trade with the African as the commodity for sale. Similarly, the illegitimate occupation of South Africa by the Europeans is considered to be a divine authority of their attitude towards the African.²² Hobley underscored the point when he wrote that if Africans had been white or yellow, critics would not be so pessimistic about their future progress.²³

The Europeans considered Africans as pagans and barbarians not worthy to consult, or to make treaties with. As Stewart points out, "competition for prestige among the powers took precedence over any humanitarian or ethnic considerations. When the question arose which power should possess which territory, the matter was decided by negotiation. If one power "lost" some territory that it claimed, compensation was usually offered elsewhere. In the delimitation of boundaries, little attention was paid even

²¹ J. H. Speke, "Recording the Oral History of the Bakuba," Journal of African History, 1, no. 1 (1960): xiii.

²² Charles William Hobley, Kenya: From Chartered Company to Crown Colony (London: Frank Cass and Co., 1970), 195.

²³ Ibid.

to natural frontiers such as rivers or mountains--and none at all to the wishes of the Africans involved in the transfer of the territory."²⁴

The formation of the boundaries split families, clans and whole societies, disrupting the very foundations harmony and usalama. The point is brought home by Bolton when he states:

They drew fine straight lines, permitting themselves a few wiggles here and there, to signify the frontiers. Occasionally, they cut right through a people's or tribe's domain, as the Abaluhya who were partitioned into Kenya and Uganda, and the Maasai, split into Kenya and Tanzania.²⁵

The sad divisions were a cause of pain and weakness that has hindered African stability and prosperity.

Missionary Interruption

The western missionaries disrupted Kenya with unresolved, denominational hatreds. The earliest missionaries to the East African coast were Portuguese Roman Catholic missionaries who arrived in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Portuguese were completely wiped out by the Oman Arabs in 1689. Nthamburi states that:

Any remnants of Christianity were either overrun by Muslim believers who forced the

²⁴ Eaton C. Stewart, The Rise and Fall of Western Colonialism (New York: Praeger, 1964), 105.

²⁵ Kenneth Bolton, "A Guide to Kenya," in Harambee Country (London: Bles, 1970), 16.

Christians to abandon their faith, or the Christian converts quickly embraced the faith of the conquerors. The sweep was so thorough that when Krapf arrived on the scene in 1844, he did not find any trace of Christianity.²⁶

Krapf lost his wife and child and wrote home saying:

Tell our friends at home that there is now on the East African coast a lonely missionary grave. This is a sign that you have commenced the struggle....As the victories of the Church are gained by stepping over the graves of her members, you may be more convinced that the hour is at hand when you are summoned to the conversion of Africa from its eastern shore.²⁷

In response to Krapf's request the C.M.S. sent another German missionary Rev. John Rebmann in 1846. The missionary job description included: (1) To reduce the Bantu languages of Kenya to a western form of writing and to elucidate their grammatical construction; (2) To study the set-up of the people groups and their environmental, climatic, and geographical problems that could hinder the progress of Westernism, colonialism and missionalism.²⁸

In addition to these goals, Krapf had his own personal vision to establish a chain of mission stations from the east coast to the west coast of Africa. He recruited six people to help achieve this vision. But some of the

²⁶ Nthamburi, xvi.

²⁷ Muindi, 1.

²⁸ Ibid., 3-4.

recruits turned back, others died, leaving Rebmann, Krapf and Erhardt in the mission field.

Unfortunately, the pioneering missionaries did not share the same spirit and vision. Erhardt and Rebmann insisted on establishing a strong Christian base on the coast of Kenya. Erhardt desired an economic demonstration by raising cattle, poultry, pigs and sheep; trading in ivory and rhino horns; mining minerals as well as growing fruits. Erhardt and Rebmann started an estate and basically believed a chain of mission stations could be possible only after European rule. Rebmann opposed practical training in carpentry, building, brickmaking, and other practical projects, terming them worldly. He concentrated on preaching and teaching the Gospel.

The introduction of Christianity to East Africa began with trouble, struggle and conflicts and a failure to meet the usalama needs of the people. The local people were not well trained in practical skills of farming, stewardship, education, medicine, industry and the integrity of creation. These issues were perhaps left to the missions that arrived later in the East African scene.

Among the missions²⁹ that followed the pioneering work, were the United Methodist Mission (U.M.M. 1862); and

²⁹ Kogo, n. p.

the Holy Ghost Fathers (H.G.F. 1889). The Fathers introduced coffee planting at their Kosi Tana River Mission Station in 1890. Coffee has ever since become the leading cash crop of Kenya. After the news that coffee could grow in Kenya reached Europe, many other missionary societies exploded into Kenya.

These included: the East African Scottish mission (Private) from Scotland in 1891; the Bavarian Evangelical mission from Germany in 1891; an Independent missionary, Stuart Watt, sponsored by his family from Scotland in 1893; the Vicarage of Upper Nile from Scotland in 1894; the Gospel missionary Society from U.S.A. in 1895 (later converged with the Church of Scotland mission to form the Presbyterian Church of East Africa); and the African Inland Mission from U.S.A. in 1896.

The missionaries converted, indoctrinated and isolated communities into different camps of Protestants and Roman Catholics, Methodists and Presbyterians, Pentecostals and charismatics, acenji (pagans or anti-change) and athomi (Christians or scholars). A denunciation of the African culture and religion was a prerequisite for becoming Christian and available for services to the colonial masters.

Colonial Revolution

The denunciation of the African culture meant a rapid

change which was not an evolution but a colonial revolution. The revolution was against usalama, violent, bloody, exploitive and inhuman.

The conflicts between the local settlers, the Indians and the nationalist Africans were so deep that the Muranga Africans murdered 5 Indians.³⁰ The government sent out a large control under captain Maycock who killed 200 Muranga Africans and captured 300 cattle, 200 sheep with a loss of one killed and 13 wounded on the British side.

In 1904, the Commissioner and Consul-general, Sir Charles Eliot, sent another military expedition to the Iriaini people of Nyeri because they attacked the "friendlies."³¹ The patrol captured large numbers of cattle, sheep and goats killing between 400 and 1,500 people. Similar expeditions were carried out against the peoples of Sotik, Kisii and the Nandi and the Embu, with mounting demands for more land and labor for prospective settlers.³² The colonial office concluded:

Unless we are going to abrogate our civilizing mission in Africa such expeditions with their attendant slaughter are necessary. Some colonial officers like Sadler believed

³⁰ G. H. Mungeam, British Rule in Kenya, 1895-1912 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), 67.

³¹ Ibid., 84.

³² Ibid., 151.

that "once they are conquered and have admitted our superiority they settle down once for all and become good subjects."³³

Some officers resigned due to troubles in the land issues while one was transferred after the failure to deal with the difficulties posed by a mixed race community.³⁴ Ormsby-Gore remarked:

I quite agree that the peculiar circumstances of Kenya...make it, for the student of colonial politics, at once the fascinating and most difficult of all the colonial problems that have to be faced by the British government.³⁵

The relationship of the Indians, the whites and the Africans as racial groupings had cultural and economic consequences among other things.

Cultural Implications

The disruptions in Kenya ruined traditional farming and the peoples' sanctity of custom and tradition."³⁶ Kenya was occupied by many African communities who did not have clear-cut boundary lines between them. "All were engaged in primary activities, arable agriculture, pastoralism, fishing, hunting, etc. However, one thing was common to

³³ Ibid., 164-65.

³⁴ Mungeam, ix.

³⁵ R. M. Dilley, British Policy in Kenya Colony, 2nd ed. (London: Frank Cass and Co., 1966), 3.

³⁶ Mazrui, 67.

them--they had all individually developed a complex and dependable socio-culture with a tradition and a viable heritage."³⁷

The gathering-hunting communities, for example, gathered wild plants, honey, insects and eggs and hunted from the rain forests to the semi-desert bushes for their food. The pastoral communities were and are always migrating with their flocks in search of green grass and water for their livestock. The agricultural communities used slash-and-burn agriculture in which the vegetation is burnt down and the land is used as long as the ash fertilizes it. They grew millet, sorghum, sugar canes, cassava, beans, yams, vegetables, bananas, peanut and maize. Some communities grew crops and kept livestock for milk and meat. The communities engaged in barter trade with each other.

The European disruption disturbed African economy while at the same time it introduced a new capitalistic culture that was individualistic and designed to make profits rather than bring healing, reconciliation, restoration and dignity to a wounded humanity. The people lost most of their cultural self-understanding, self-worth, meaning, and

³⁷ Moi, 5.

purpose of life.³⁸

The final result was what the writer's father termed the ustarabu (civilization) of oppression, poverty, homelessness, loneliness, decimation of the wild game and the forests.³⁹ This is not far-fetched from the Meru concept of the white people as the maitha ma nyomba ya mwanki (literally meaning the "enemies from the house of fire or hell." The writer's mother figured out that the created life is to be "used fairly and carefully passed on to others in a sustainable condition."⁴⁰ She proverbially referred to the earth as the muguguta wa mwingi (a skin for the community). Without the earth, the community has no existence. Without compassionate care for the earth, the community is without a future.

The philosophy simply requires good stewardship as opposed to harming the environment, social injustice, corruption, and nepotism. Why does it seem easier to plunder and corrupt than to preserve and sustain? Because "The way that leads to destruction is broad, and its gate is

³⁸ Carol R. Ember and Melvin Ember, Cultural Anthropology, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1977), 23.

³⁹ Joel Murianki, oral interview, Chogoria, Kenya, 6 January 1990.

⁴⁰ Kezziah Nkinga, oral interview, Chogoria, Kenya, 6 January 1990.

wide enough for all the multitudes who choose its easy way. But the Gateway to life is small, and the road is narrow, and only a few ever find it" (Matt. 7:13-14 LB).

Economic Consequences

Economically, Kenya is alongside developing countries where the hungry, for the most part live.⁴¹ The poor nations have plenty of natural resources compounded with rich and fertile soils capable of feeding their populations many times over.⁴² The misery, poverty and underdevelopment in the developing countries did not drop from heaven but was created and imposed upon all the former European colonies by the Europeans.

The global capitalist system for the last four hundred years resulted in the impoverishment of the developing countries. It was the European "mono-cultural system of production"⁴³ (a one crop or one mineral export economy) of oil, copper, bauxite, zinc, tin, rubber, sugar, peanuts, cocoa and coffee in Latin America, Asia and Africa that caused underdevelopment in these countries. The underdevelopment results in poverty and hunger which are the manifestation of "a world economic order dominated and

⁴¹ Suzanne C. Toton, World Hunger (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1982), 3.

⁴² Ibid., 3.

⁴³ Ibid.

structured by the advanced capitalist nations for the purpose of maintaining the stability of their own economic, political, and social systems."⁴⁴

The European ruthless exploitation of the best lands that gave healthy diets to the inhabitants were "expropriated to produce cash crops for the European market."⁴⁵ The underdevelopment of Kenya is not a result of overpopulation, ignorance, pre-capitalist economic structures, lack of resources and primitive economy, but lack of economic, social and political wholeness--a lack of usalama.

Kenya's rate of population increase in 1981-84 was estimated at 4.1 percent per annum, and the country's birthrate averaged 56.1 per 1000 in 1975-80 (UN estimate). It was the highest natural increase in the world. A government paper, published in 1986, forecast that...40 percent of the work force would be unemployed, by the year 2000.⁴⁶ Moi states:

One thing is sure: that a rapid rate of population growth places much strain and

⁴⁴ Ibid., 61.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Richard Walker, "Kenya: Recent History," in Africa South of the Sahara, 20th ed. (London: Europe Publications, 1990).

stress not only on the economy but especially on the living environment.⁴⁷

It is common knowledge that the highest densities of population occur, not in the poor countries, but in the rich, developed countries. England has a population density of 586 per sq. mi.; West Germany, 606; Japan, 708; Belgium, 814; and the Netherlands, 938. The poor countries, by comparison, have relatively low densities of population. India has 415 people per sq. mi.; the Philippines, 310; China, 197; Mexico, 62; Panama, 47; Brazil, 26; Tanzania, 25; Peru, 25; Paraguay, 12; and Gabon, 4.⁴⁸ Kenya has about 35 people per square kilometer.⁴⁹ The country is in 75 percent desert condition and only 9.5 percent⁵⁰ is cultivated. It is appropriate to ask:

What are you doing to feed the nation, without plundering or killing another nation? What do you, as a physician, do against the chronic diseases, or as an educator for the happiness of the children, or as an economist for the elimination of poverty, or as a builder for more hygienic living conditions? Give us a concrete answer or shut up.⁵¹

⁴⁷ Moi, 55.

⁴⁸ Penton, 102.

⁴⁹ Patrick Johnstone, Operation World: A Day-to-Day Guide to Praying for the World, 4th ed. (Bulstrode, England: WEC Publications, 1987), 265.

⁵⁰ Johnstone, 265.

⁵¹ Marcus G. Raskin, The Common Good (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986), 1.

A need exists for a vision of usalama. If there is no vision, then the community will collapse into the hands of a few greedy, corrupt, and squandering "blind guides leading the blind, and both will fall into a ditch" (Matt. 15:14 LB).

Kenya finds itself providing for the rich nations privileged access to the raw materials and cheap labor. The country keeps on debt-serving, cutting its budgets and devaluing its currency. The entire economy is heavily dependent on imports.⁵² It is stated that the high rate of the continued population growth imposes "major strains upon the economy in terms of public expenditure and also threatens political and social stability."⁵³ However, the economy of Kenya is affected by a whole system.

A child dying of kwashiorkor (malnutrition) in the Nairobi slums of the Mathare (Crazy) valley, or a woman practicing prostitution in the Mji wa Huruma (Village of Mercy), or a VIP (Very Important Person) driving a Mercedes Benz in the Nairobi Lovington Green area are all interconnected. They are all part of the Harambee-Nyayoism system, related and dependent on one another. If the Church in Kenya is to bring usalama--sufficiency and well-being to

⁵² Walker, 105.

⁵³ Ibid.

the society, it must effectively deal with the social ills such as unemployment, underemployment, corruption, hunger and poverty.

Africans can not flourish in foreign cultural ideologies of communism, marxism and capitalism. "Capitalism is by its very nature a system which promotes individualism, competition, and profit-making with little or no regard for the social cost. As such it is an unjust system which should be replaced."³⁴ The communist systems in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, the Chinese and the Tanzanian Ujamaa styles have proved to fail and hurt the people.

Capitalism, Marxism and communism have made things difficult for Kenya due to their foreignness. They must go if Kenya will be healed and prosper economically, socially, religiously and psychologically. Kenya's development ought to be based on well structured African values emanating from the very best of all its values and integrated with the best values from the East, West, North and South, provided the philosophical foundations for these values will remain strictly African. The foundations must be based on a broad vision of usalama in order to narrow down the gap between the poor and the rich. The economic healing will occur when

³⁴ Penton, 100.

communities learn to be caring, loving, peaceful and participative in the communities's common good.

The elements that integrate the society into a common wholeness in principles, philosophy and life⁵⁵ are more important than capitalism or communism. To be against either is not to be against Kenya but "a system which reaps excess for the few and scatters crumbs for the many."⁵⁶ Usalama seeks for the common good for every one.

The Churches in Kenya will not be held anti-capitalism, unChristian, naive and unpatriotic for wanting to pray, provoke and participate in discussions seeking a more humane approach in the economics of the country. If capitalism is the mother of injustice and misery in the ghettos, in chronic poverty and unemployment, in poor hospitals and school managements, then it is only right for the Church to stand on the side of labor, the oppressed and the poor, preaching the "primacy of the common good over individual gain."⁵⁷

Otherwise, could the Church of Jesus Christ watch quietly a people suffering from poverty, hunger and kwashiorkor (malnutrition)? Could the Church in all good

⁵⁵ Ibid., 21.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 110.

⁵⁷ Moi, 111.

conscience watch the wealthy use their political influence to manipulate tax systems and other government policies for themselves first, and only secondary for the community?

If the country follows the true African roots of harambee-nyayoism, it will be found to be open-ended, loving, hospitable, generous, participatory, free and consisting of sharing of power as well as the wealth of the country. No one in that country will sacrifice the common good for individualism, insecurities, lack of confidence and a lack of patriotism.

Patriotism is lacking on the part of those who send their money into foreign banks abroad, who refuse to return home after going abroad and who will not invest in their own motherland. For true shalom-wholeness, Africans have yet to wake up and reject the neo-colonial, socio-psychological low esteem in the personal, institutional, national and international affairs. Africans have to heal from their economic, political, social and psychological weariness. Africans in Kenya and elsewhere, need usalama--wholeness!

When Africans develop a vision of usalama they will free themselves from the disasters of unguarded famines, floods, droughts, malaria, sleeping sickness, yellow fever, bilharzia, and river blindness. Kenya shall be a land of usalama-prosperity and self-sufficiency. There shall be a balance in the spiritual, social, political and economic

equilibrium of the society. A need exists for a vision of usalama to be a focal point of equilibrium in the church's and national life.

Summary

This chapter has attempted to show that the communities of Kenya need a vision of usalama because their cultural roots, stability, and well-being were interrupted by foreigners. The communities were hurt by exploitation, slave trade, colonialism and neocolonialism. As a result, the cultural values and attitudes were weakened in the areas of communal life and the care for the environment.

A vision of shalom enables the Churches of Kenya to play their roles more effectively in beautifying, nurturing and sustaining the cultural harmony of human relationships and the beauty of creation. The vision will heal, restore, dignify, identify and render Africans self-sufficient. The vision will make the African Churches from Nairobi to Lagos and from Cairo to Capetown, the centers of wholeness and hope. Then the ancient continent will once again, through the grace of God, arise for the second time and become a garden full of healthy communities enjoying the abundance of the fullness of life.

CHAPTER 6

No Vision for Ecofeminism

The women of Kenya are diversely beautiful¹ but relate mysteriously with men. Their complex relationships with men has meant many things including forced labor, female circumcision, and polygamous marriages. This chapter focuses on the role of the Church in female circumcision, forced and general life in Kenya. It suggests a new Church vision of usalama for women in our times.

As a young boy, the writer spent lots of time with his mother while his father was usually gone far away from home. His mother's best song was:

Jehovah God of Bethel
Helped the humanity.
Even today, God helps us
Now and for ever
Yes, now and for ever.²

This was Kezziah's song translated from the Meru language into English. She sang it while working in the house, at the homestead and in the gardens. Although Kezziah missed her husband, she understood he was sending

¹ Church Women United, p. 8.

² Nkinga.

the cattle out to green pastures, or working as a casual laborer at the missionary station or at some distant European farm in order to secure taxes for the colonial government.

The missionaries did not understand why Joel, Kezziah's husband, missed the Church and especially the holy communion. They did not visit, consult or seek to understand why he consecutively missed Church. The missionaries considered the writer's father a terrible Church truant, denounced him publicly and excommunicated him in absentia.

Upon his return home, he was disappointed, angered and enraged by the sad news of his disgraceful excommunication from the Church. Feeling a heavy sense of humiliation, Joel rejected the missionary Church and married a second wife according to the accepted custom of the Meru people.

Joel became a polygamist in order to regain his lost personality and dignity in the community. By returning to the African traditions, Joel found an accepting, loving and respectful social identity, something different from the self-imposing missionary Church.³

In the Meru traditional polygamous marriage, the first wife occupied a special place as the head wife of a

³ Joel Murianki Charumbi, oral interview, Chogoria, Kenya, January 1990.

polygamous marriage. Kezziah was also expected to accept and to be happy with her new colleague and her promotion in marriage. But she felt rejected and unhappy. Her father was a polygamist before his two wives died around 1914 (indiya mbaara--during the war).⁴ Having lost her mother at a very tender young age, Kezziah had a negative experience with the woman that her father remarried. This painful situation repeated itself in Kezziah's life after her husband left the Church and married a second wife.

Polygamy reopened Kezziah's childhood wounds. She shared her pain with her seven children, especially the youngest three. The writer was the second to the last child in the family. His older sister escaped the situation by getting married prematurely at the age of 18. Her first marriage failed. Her second marriage is doing great. His youngest sister left home to live with her relatives. The writer lived with his mother's pain, empathized with her and witnessed his mother's burden increase just like that of multitudes of African women. Levine expressed her view of the experience of African women as follows:

As tillers of the soil and market traders, they bear a subsistence burden unique among women of the world. As the wives of polygymists on this most polygymous of continents, they share marital

⁴ 1914 is an approximate date. Kezziah thinks the two ladies passed away about this time because, "It was at the beginning of First World War."

rights to a degree that is rare in other places. Yet their relative freedom of movement and independence of activity and spirit have long attracted the interest of outside observers.⁵

As opposed to Levine's view of attracting interest to African women, the writer's participation in his mother's pain and that of many other women in his parish ministry, calls for a vision of usalama for women. African women are not only poor but abused and expected by the society to be the mothers, wives, cultivators, teachers, nurses and churchgoers in order to retain their respect.⁶ The women either formed a theology of liberation and hope or became activists in order to express their feelings.

The women express their feelings and agonies as they sing songs that somewhat communicate a laity theology of liberation. Songs in most of Africa are not just sung for pleasure but for communication. The women of the Church dance and sing gently to communicate the following message:

Muthuri nierwe ndimugure iguru [Tell the husband I'm married in heaven]
Ndimugure, ndimugure [I'm married, I'm married]
Muthuri nierwe ndimugure iguru na thakame
[Tell the husband I'm married in heaven by the blood].⁷

⁵ Sarah Levine, Mothers and Wives: Gusii Women of East Africa (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 1.

⁶ Ibid., 387.

⁷ Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Woman's Guild, Nanyuki Parish, Nanyuki, Kenya, 1985.

The women believed they are married to the heavens through Jesus Christ by whose blood they are cleansed, liberated, consoled and comforted. However, their song is a form of escapism from a difficult situation in community. It keeps hope alive among women as they produce food for the community, care for the community and contribute considerable resources to their families. Heaven frees women from agony in order to sing, dance and celebrate life.

Thuku and Women's Forced Labor

Activism also helps women to earn their rights in some cases. An example is the Harry Thuku Women's "Riot" in Kenya in 1922. Harry Thuku was the first African man to protest against forced labor and the abuse of women by the colonial government. His grievances included the Kipande, the government's doubling of the hut and poll taxes, a reduction in African wages, oppression by tribal police, and forced labor, especially of women and children. The women had particular reason for supporting Thuku due to the issue of the women's labor. Thuku explains it this way:

They would simply go to the people's houses--very often where there were beautiful women and daughters--and point out which were to come to work. Sometimes they had to work a distance from home, and the number of girls who got pregnant this way was very great.⁸

⁸ Ibid., 16.

Thuku agonized even rather offensively at seeing the young, single, insecure Christian women converts being pitted against older, powerful chiefs who could afford the dowry for additional wives. These young women were taken as brides and wives against their will by the old, polygamous, rich men. The women loved Thuku because he spoke against their exploitation. The chiefs hated Thuku because he criticized their illegal use of office, their corruption and their misgovernment. But the chiefs argued that they only induced and encouraged women and children to go for the forced labor.

As a result, the abuses against women increased, ranging from rape, beating, withholding of wages and food, harsh living and working conditions, and being kept away from their homes at night.⁷ Harry Thuku was educated by the Gospel Mission Society and the teaching of the Gospel Mission stood up in his heart. As both Kikuyu and Christian, Thuku developed strict values and rules about female sexuality.

The Riot

Harry Thuku was arrested on March 14, 1922 and confined in the Nairobi police station. Two days later, the women rioted. The forced labor issue indicated that women in

⁷ Cited in Africa: Journal of International Africa Institute, 59, no. 3 (1989): 310.

Kenya could organize themselves to achieve social, economic and legal ends. Research has shown that there were¹⁰ many co-operative ventures organized by the Kikuyu women in post-colonial Kenya, some based on the traditional modes of co-operation. It was evident that the harambee collective activity was well understood and practiced. Women came together to protect their interests, to organize strikes and to better their conditions of work.

Women, though less educated than men, were highly respected by the whole community as long as they talked well, used some logic, took care of their families, planted and harvested crops, provided surplus food for the family and for the guests and were bound to their rural homes and gardens.¹¹ They had an independent spirit, considerable bargaining power and a high status vis-a-vis men. The councils of men made political decisions affecting both men and women, whereas the women's councils dealt with decisions affecting only women--the circumcision of girls, birth and religious activities.¹²

The demonstrations and strikes by the women in Kenya are relatively simple as compared to the more complex Anlu

¹⁰ Cited in Africa 59, no. 3 (1989): 321.

¹¹ Kenyatta, 63.

¹² Ibid., 194-95.

uprising in the British Cameroons and the Women's War in Nigeria which continued for months with demonstrations, attacks on jails, and damage to property. However, the patterns and characteristics of militancy had some striking similarities in East and West Africa.

In the spirit of womanhood and the common good, all the women understood that they shared a common world in the linking bond of sex, and that their strength lay in standing by each other, in their solidarity and in their co-operation. They all sang abusive, indecent songs, mostly made high-pitched cries and physically assaulted male leaders and property. These degrading tactics of women were designed to humiliate, ridicule and shame the physically powerful and authoritative male dignitaries who often blocked all the avenues for justice.

The Europeans exploited African women predominantly for economic reasons. The African men exploited women by circumcision mainly for traditional ritualistic, human developmental purposes and sexual relationships. Yet, the western and the African males relatively overlapped economically and sexually over the African women. The women suffered from the evils of both European and African males.

Female Circumcision

Africans culturally and spiritually regarded physical circumcision for both males and females as essential for the

attainment of adult status and responsibilities of manhood and womanhood in the community. The word circumcision refers to the trimming of the genital organs of both sexes. The ritual was accompanied by ceremonies, dances, songs and worship for purification of the young women if they had broken any of the prohibitions of the social ethical code, such as promiscuity, disobedience and masturbation (if masturbation was prohibitable). The Mutahikania (Purifier) also conducted a ceremony called Kurathima ciana, that is, "blessing our children," on behalf of the community and the families of the candidates. It was the most central event to be remembered in one's life.

The Church of Scotland Mission at Kikuyu led by John W. Arthur began systematic teaching against its practice as early as 1906.¹³ At the same time, Marion Stevenson (1907-1930), and other women developed a definite curriculum teaching against female circumcision. They gave the following definitions of female circumcision:

1. "Female circumcision" as it exists among the Kikuyu is an operation which varies in severity, some sections of the tribe practicing a more drastic form than others. The following is a generally accepted description of the "Major Operation."
"it involves the removal of not only the clitoris, but also the labia minora and half the labia majora, together with the surrounding tissue, resulting in the

¹³ Muindi, 78.

permanent mutilation affecting the woman's natural functions of micturition, menstruation and parturition, with disastrous results not only to the birth rate, but also to the physique and vitality of the tribe."

2. It is beyond evil that the operation described above fully justifies the definition suggested above by the late Miss Marion Stevenson of the Church of Scotland Mission in Kenya after many year's work among the Kikuyu women--namely "The Sexual Mutilation of Women." This term was adopted by the Kenya Missionary Council in 1929 as conveying a truer idea of the nature of the operation than the customary operation of "Female Circumcision."¹⁴

At a European Staff meeting convened at Thika on 21 July 1916, it was decided that "female circumcision" be forbidden within the Church and that

[a] girl who has been baptized and made public profession or who is a mission boarder, or is the child of Christian parents or is the protegee may not be circumcised.¹⁵

The Europeans considered the female circumcision issue together from time to time but at no time did they consider it with the African representatives. Even the leading European settlers were included in discussions but not the Africans.

So an opposition to ecclesiastical authority began from 1923 onwards. Abusive letters were sent out to missionaries, there was a general persecution of Christians

¹⁴ Kikuyu Mission Council, Memorandum, Kenya, 1931, 3.

¹⁵ Muindi, 80.

and vigorous propaganda for the retention of female circumcision. By 1925, the Church of Scotland Mission at Tumutumu was attacked on the basis that they were the secret agencies of the colonial powers, snatching land from the people and selling it to the European settlers.¹⁶ The missionaries, of course, needed land for the development of Schools and agricultural training. But the angry Africans destroyed their gardens and dug up their crops.

The women church members were invited to examine their position and to exercise their freedom of conscience to participate or abstain from the holy communion, the candidacy for baptism or admission to the catechumenate.¹⁷ The women found it difficult to be loyal to the church and African culture. They were expected to put up with this ambivalence just as they did with other societal burdens.

Women's Burdens

The women of Kenya put up with heavy financial commitments while their male partners were out working or looking for jobs in the urban areas. The division of labor for economic purposes is based on sex. The women have to be nyumbani doing housekeeping, tending the kids, digging in the garden and keeping busy for almost twenty hours per day.

¹⁶ Ibid., 90.

¹⁷ Ibid.

The men are to be out in offices, in casual manual jobs, engaging in undesirable kitchen politics, smoking, taking snuff, gambling, playing games and having fun or abusing alcohol. Meanwhile, the women stayed at home with little or no money, little education or no education, little or no support from their spouses, little or no political awareness, and little or no health care. The division of labor based on man's work and woman's work does gross injustice to the women of Kenya.

The rural economy of Kenya is mainly agricultural and it is the women who are expected to produce, improve and expand export crops for Kenya's livelihood. For instance:

In a large part of western Kenya, men have traditionally migrated elsewhere in search of wage labor, while women stayed at home and managed agricultural production. Even prior to the establishment of this pattern, women performed a major portion of the agricultural labor and management of the food supply. Virtually all women belong to organizational networks through which they share agricultural labor and provide mutual aid. Men dominate administrative offices and political authority networks which provide contacts and information about valuable agricultural services.¹⁸

The sexual inequality of men and women is simply a kind of social stratification. The women will usually find themselves inferior in status even when they hold similar

¹⁸ Kathleen A. Standt, Agricultural Policy and Implementation: A Case Study from Western Kenya (West Hartford: Kumarian Press, 1985), xi.

positions as men. However, an upper class woman or middle class woman may have superior status to a lower class woman. But in many respects she will remain inferior to an upper or middle class man.

Since men enjoy superior status in politics, economics and social life because women have inferior status, they have little motivation to change their cultural gender conspiracy roles that reinforce the pattern of male dominance. A harambee in sharing equally the responsibilities of wealth in the family as well as in society may readily convert men and women into partners with equal power and prestige.

In the urban areas of Kenya, the class, race, ethnic and cultural ideologies that may be used for the domination of women by men is changing. The process of urbanization is eroding beliefs that explain and justify the potential social arrangements for the oppression of women. Although urban women are more emancipated than the rural women, many of them, especially the single mothers live below the poverty line. In the Nanyuki slums where the author of this project served the community for five years, most of the single mothers earned their income by prostitution and by selling illegal alcohol.

Children of single mothers are born to hardship and poverty almost as a permanent condition. Once poor, they

are likely to remain that way until the end of their days. The poverty of children may be linked to the poverty of their mothers, which in turn, resulted from changes in the African cohesive family life, causing the economic vulnerability of women and children. The children from poor families are likely to be poorly educated and usually become parents at an early age. These poor children receive very little political attention as they cannot speak for themselves and are ill-educated. The problem of childhood poverty is then perpetuated and worsened for many generations tied to the poverty of their mothers.

The situation is even complex among the Muslim women for whom the Islamic sacred Koran declares:

Men are superior to women on account of the qualities in which God has given them pre-eminence.¹⁹

This Islamic teaching is used both in the urban areas and the rural areas to justify the exclusion of women from religious, political and economic status. The exclusion of women is experienced in other cultures as well.

In Saudi Arabia, for example, women may not appear without veils, may not drive cars, may not work in the same office with men, and do not even have the right to vote. In the Islamic nation of Oman, women are permitted to attend the country's only college- but they have to enter segregated classes through their own back door, and the entire campus

¹⁹ Ian Robertson, 320.

has a system of overhead walkways for the exclusive use of women, so that contact with men can be avoided at all times.²⁰

The men are valued over the women even in the Judeo-Christian tradition. In the Genesis biblical account, God is portrayed as having said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him" (Gen. 2:18). "So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep... Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man" (vv. 21-22). The language in Genesis refers to God as a "he" and reflects the subordinate "helping" or "servitude" role of the woman as opposed to the dominant role of the man. It is a reflection of the social patriarchal attitude of the ancient and modern Jews to women. Every morning, a male orthodox Jew is expected to say the following prayer:

Blessed art thou, oh Lord our God, King of the Universe, that I was not born a gentile. Blessed art thou, oh Lord our God, that I was not born a slave. Blessed art thou, oh Lord our God, King of the Universe, that I was not born a woman.²¹

Some Christian denominations are just as biased to women as the Muslims and the Jews. Thanks to God that the PCEA has reshaped its theology in connection to gender roles in the church. The writer attended a theological school and

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ian Robertson, 321.

sat in the same class for three solid years with the only woman in class. She was very intelligent, socialable and happy. But she sometimes shed feminine tears to make her point among Christian males. The other female minister was sociable, smiling, compassionate and intellectual.

There are more women than men in the Church and the PCEA has to be commended for considering the call to ordained ministry on the basis of the individual human qualities rather than biological sex or cultural gender. The PCEA also ordains women as church elders who preach, counsel and lead the congregations. The ordination of women into priesthood is accepted by the Presbyterian men that women are not only the majority in the church but that sexism, inferiority and discrimination have no room in the Presbyterian Church of East Africa.

The PCEA made a courageous decision in spite of its evangelical stance that takes the authority of the scriptures seriously. St. Paul of the New Testament appears biased against women. Why does Paul argue that the woman was created for man? (1 Cor. 11:9.) Why does Paul teach that the man is the head of the wife and the woman should submit to the man? (Eph. 5: 22-23.) Did Paul view women as sexual property for men, and so expected to be suitably submissive and deferential?

A striking illustration of this submission is the way women learn to hide, reveal, or distort their bodies in accordance with the prevailing male notions of how women should appear. In traditional China, men admired tiny female feet-so girls' feet were permanently deformed through foot binding, a painful practice that left them barely able to walk. In some West African tribes where men admire very plump women, young girls deliberately fatten themselves into obesity in order to attract a husband. Among some North African peoples, women have for generations submitted to brutal surgery to remove their clitoris-supposedly to reduce their sexual appetites and thus keep them faithful to their husbands. In north America, where large, firm breasts have been admired for most of this century, millions of women have had their breasts surgically reshaped or enlarged. Now that men's ideals for womanhood is shifting to a leaner and more athletic look, dieting has become a female obsession, with over a third of American women considering themselves too fat...Men, in contrast, are rarely expected to shape their bodies to conform to women's notions of how they should look-for men rely rather on their power, wealth, or prestige to attract the opposite sex.²²

In the second place, PCEA recognized that sexism may be based on a deeply ingrained cultural-religious attitude that regards women as inferior to men and as a part of a divinely ordained natural order. The sexist belief is so pervasive that some denominations will not hire women for equivalent positions with men in the church. According to John

²² Ibid., 321.

Temple,²³ Pauline ideas of sex, women and marriage were interpreted and modelled by the early Church after the viewpoints of the Stoic philosophers such as Aristotle. Temple wondered if the same Greek philosophy is still preached from Christian pulpits. The rightful biblical theology is preached by Paul when he reveals the great truth that:

We are no longer Jews or Greeks or slaves or free men or even merely men or women, but we are all the same—we are Christians. (Gal. 3:28 LB)

The true Pauline theology affirms women. Women can be charismatic, power-filled and do just about anything that men can do. It is the historical Christian Church that has made men masters and Lords of women. Paul's heart "earnestly sought for the Church, that there be sexual equality among Christians."²⁴

The denominations that still attack women in communities, Churches, cathedrals and mission fields are a disgrace to the love of Christ. They need the love of Jesus who died for love and gives people the courage to love. When you love, you are bold. You are not even afraid of

²³ John Temple Bristow, What Paul Really Said About Women (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988), xii-xiii.

²⁴ Ibid., 119.

death.²⁵ A loving Church is what appears in the gospel of St. Luke, an ideal community, which takes half of one's possessions, and generously shares with the less fortunate in the community. Elisabeth considers Luke well-disposed towards women but his Church disappointing because it is ruled by men and served by women.²⁶ Sexism mars Christian loving in a most profound joy and chaste passion.²⁷ A need exists for a harmonious loving Church--Love for the joy, dignity, patience, charity and grace that is possible for all human beings.²⁸ The whole church can work together toward usalama for women.

Harambee for Ecofeminism

The PCEA may do well to learn, teach and participate vigorously in women's liberation activities. Women are in anguish over being abused and exploited by men. Men do not regard women as equals or see them as created in the image of God and possessing the same dignity as men.

In consequence, the women have been beaten, broken and mutilated. The women have been exploited for economic

²⁵ Elisabeth Moltmann-Wendel, The Women Around Jesus (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1990), 1.

²⁶ Ibid., 142.

²⁷ Mary E. Giles, The Feminist Mystic (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1989), 4.

²⁸ Ibid., 156.

purposes, for fetching water and firewood, for producing and cooking food, for producing children and caring of the children. The privatization of land for revenue generation displaced women more critically, eroding their traditional land-use rights. The expansion of cash crops undermined food production, and women were often left with meager resources to feed and care for children, the aged and the infirm.

Men have also abused mother earth and now she has to be saved from nuclear disaster or other forms of ecological disasters, created by men. Since men cannot act effectively alone, there is a need for a harambee and a balance between the male and female perceptions. It is the lack of harambee between men and women that results in the misunderstanding of the human identity of men and women and the alienation from one another and from the mother earth. Rosemary states that:

Patriarchal cultures, especially the Western culture and social system which has been shaped for millennia by dualistic thinking, reinforces and ratifies the male development tendencies. It encourages men not only to think that their tendencies are normal, but to accentuate them... Females, by contrast...begin to receive negative messages about their ways of perception by early puberty. Holistic perception is seen as unreal and unrealistic. Girls are told that they are less capable of linear rationality.

They are encouraged to study subjects that are more aesthetic, but that don't land themselves to the skilful mastery of public power.²⁹

Rosemary Ruether concludes "we scarcely know what it means for men and for women to be fully human."³⁰ The hierarchical paradigms and pyramidal views of the world can be powerful shapers of our attitudes. The hierarchical order starts with God, men, women, children, animals (the most sentient first), plants and ends up with inanimate objects such as rocks.

The model of hierarchy... starts with non-material spirit (God) as the source of the chain of being and continues down to non-spiritual "matter" as the bottom of the chain of being and the most inferior, valueless, and dominated point in the chain of command.³¹

The ranking of status also takes place within the human categories as dualisms are set up between mind (superior) and body (inferior); intellect (superior) and emotions (inferior). The nineteenth century Darwinian theory was abused by the western scientists who argued that black Africans were closer to nature than whites because they had descended more directly from the primates. So, it was okay

²⁹ Rosemary Ruether, The Wrath of Jonah: The Crisis of Religious Nationalism in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (New York: Harper and Row, 1989), 263-64.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid., 145.

to enslave the Africans. A similar argument was used in Nazi Germany to justify the gassing of Jews, Blacks and homosexuals.

Men and women for usalama will reject that arrogance of male-dominated humanism which believes that humans have the ability to confront and solve many problems we face by applying human reason and by manipulating or "managing" the natural world. The human beings cannot live without the whole ecological community that supports our existence--we depend on so called 'lower orders' or beings. Ruether sums it up as follows:

We have only two real options: either to learn to use our intelligence to become servants of the survival and cultivation of nature, or to lose our own life-support system in an increasingly poisoned earth.³²

A vision that emphasizes connectedness rather than competitiveness is characteristic of healthy relationships between females and males. Males are already connected to the females as they come from the wombs and are, for the most of their early life, brought up by the females through breast feeding and general nurturing. This connectedness calls for strong interpersonal contacts between males and females as an essential expression of the holistic nature of life on earth. The bodily experiences of female sexuality

³² Ibid., 148.

are profound metaphors of the oneness and interconnectedness of all creation.

A vision of usalama involving men and women must have a spirit of compassion. There is immeasurable pain, misery and suffering on the planet earth. Compassion can be a connective rope that ties men, women and creation together. We are inseparable members of the web of life that are intricately connected. If we have a meaningful harambee, we shall learn from women because:

Women have been socialized in a way that allows them to experience compassion. This experience, however is often skewed by the subordinate, deferential position given to women that somehow loads the responsibility of caring for others with guilt and anxiety.

For this compassion that women have been allowed does not carry with it any power to make decisions. Both genders are fraught with pathological behaviors that serve to perpetuate the system of domination and oppression....The message of ecofeminism is that we must all cultivate the human characteristic of gentleness and caring, giving up patriarchy with all its deadly privileges.³³

Compassion....is a feeling of the life of the other--that provides "a new approach to the natural world that underlies the logging industry, mining industry, war machine--the entire realm of most modern human activities."³⁴

³³ Judith Plant, ed., Healing the Wounds: The Promise of Ecofeminism (Philadelphia: New Society Publ., 1989), 3.

³⁴ Ibid., 1.

A sense of compassion is possible when a vision of usalama occurs between intellectual knowledge about something or someone and the experience of the heart knowledge. Perhaps only God can feel the pain of the earth, the poor, oppressed and women. If God abides in us, we must start to feel the pain in our families, gardens, districts and planet. We no longer observe, but participate in the pain of life.

Summary

In this chapter, we have attempted to show that the oppression of women by female circumcision, forced labor and social injustice has been rejected by women and the Church. The missionaries led the battle against female circumcision. Harry Thuku won the war against the use of women and children for forced labor.

Women can be revolutionary and aggressive if they have a strong sense of their identity. The role of the church is to support women in achieving a sense of ecofeminism. The freedom we have acquired through Christ is the freedom that ought to be lovingly, caringly, and compassionately shared with the rest of creation. It enhances the common good for all!

CHAPTER 7
Church Contribution to
Political Leadership

The missionary Church schools are the seedbeds of most of the veteran Kenyan political leaders. This chapter will give a few examples of such leaders and their contribution to the building of Kenya.

In the early years of modern Kenya, the ecological and communal ruin began with the introduction of cash crop farming. Those who worked on the European farms picked up unpleasant diseases and took them back to their villages.¹ The Europeans prospered and the African peasants were subjected to increasing taxation, inflation and governmental controls.

The urbanization which sprung up in towns became a serious disruptive force that damaged the cultural organizations. The Asians controlled the businesses and the Europeans took away the fertile, prosperous African lands. The hurting, landless Africans became squatters on the European estates. Donald L. Barnett states:

¹ Hobley, 228.

It is not only the brute fact of landlessness, land hunger and insecurity of tenure which conditioned the Kikuyu involvement in the nationalist movement and peasant revolt; it is also the fact that for a people who attach such sacred meaning to the land the areas alienated remained within their field of experience, unattainable yet in considerable measure unused by its new (white) owners.²

The Africans lacked justice. It was in this context that Eliud Mathu became the first product of missionary education to represent Africans in the Legislative Council.

Eliud Mathu: Alone in Legislative Council

Eliud Wambu Mathu, was appointed by Governor Henry Moore as an unofficial member for African interests on October 5, 1944.³ Eliud was the first African to sit on the colonial Legislative Council (1944-1957). Mathu was educated and taught at the Alliance High School which was founded in 1926 by the Alliance of Protestant Missions (joint organization of CSM, CMS, AIM and Gospel Mission Protestant Societies). The organization was established at a Kikuyu Conference in 1913. The School taught that

what is commonly called sacrifice is the best, happiest use of one's resources--the best investment of time, strength and means.

² Donald L. Barnett and Njama Karari, Mau Mau From Within: Autobiography and Analysis of Kenya's Peasant Revolt (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1966), 34.

³ Jack R. Roelker, Mathu of Kenya, Hoover Colonial Studies, Stanford: Stanford Univ., Hoover Institution Press, 1976), preface.

He who makes no such sacrifice is most to be pitied. He is a heathen because he knows nothing of God."⁴

Mathu would act like a sacrifice for the African peoples in a council that believed Africans "would take very little part in the proceedings as they would find it difficult in following arguments between Europeans."⁵ These were days of turbulent, bitter struggle, tension, racism and violence in Kenya's modern history.

The missionary Churches, too, were no places of shalom as Mathu had watched the Christian militancy of Harry Thuku change him from a nice "mission boy" to "anathema" among the missionaries. The missionary teachers used him as an example of a misspent talent. Mathu chose to be obedient and loved by the missionaries. The Presbyterian Dr. Arthur had this to say about Mathu:

This lad is one of the most advanced Kikuyu Africans, showing not only his keenness to go forward in education but above all things to extend the Kingdom of Christ.⁶

Mathu was appointed because he was a Christian and on good terms with most of the chiefs, farmers, teachers, government officials and missionaries. But he was disturbed by the race problems in Kenya. Mathu tried to remain

⁴ Ibid., 16.

⁵ Ibid., 71.

⁶ Ibid., 29.

African but his influence in the Legislative Council was questionable. In his own words, Mathu said of his impact on the Council:

Like a drop of water beating on a rock
unceasingly, you can make a hole.⁷

Of course, Mathu used his missionary education to make a "hole" in Kenya's politics. In 1944 Mathu led the formation of the Kenya African Union (KAU), which has now become the Kenya African National Union (KANU), the only party ruling Kenya today. He also led a delegation of chiefs, clergymen, teachers, business people, and government officials to England to bring Kenyatta back to Kenya.

Kenyatta was educated by Presbyterian missionaries. He was not acceptable because he sought justice. However, Kenyatta was possibly PCEA's greatest contribution to Kenya. But there was a law against Kenyatta's return to Kenya.⁸ Upon his return to Kenya, Kenyatta became the first African President of the newly independent Kenya.

By bringing Kenyatta back home, Mathu used his missionary education to lead Kenya into great heights of nationalism by quiet, non-charismatic, vigorous, constant, dignified and intelligent methods. He was misunderstood as

⁷ Ibid., 70.

⁸ Ibid., 84.

a political opportunist whose "half-a-loaf"⁹ approach made it impossible for him to commit himself fully to either side. Mathu's prominence was really the result of his cooperation with the colonial regime. Mathu worked with the colonial government rather than the Mau Mau Liberation movement.

In the final analysis, the Mau Mau clearly won the victory, ushering the country of Kenya into independence. Thus, the political triumph went to the African people¹⁰ who forged ahead to deal with the problems of an unbalanced economy, society, unemployment, tribalism, poverty and regionalism. The victory was positive for the whole society.

Jomo Kenyatta (1890?-1978)

Kenyatta may have been born between 1890 and 1896. During his trial in 1952 (when his age was given as 59), Kenyatta said, "I do not know when I was born--what date, what month, or what year--but I think I am over fifty."

Kenyatta's father was a religious-political seer (morathi).¹¹ Very little is known about Kenyatta's

⁹ Roelker, 153.

¹⁰ Robert Buijtenhuijs, Mau Mau: Twenty Years After. The Myth and the Survivors (The Hague: Mouton, [1973]), n. p.

¹¹ Anthony Horwarth, Kenyatta (Nairobi: East African Publ. House, 1967), 20.

childhood. But his step-father says, "He was a clever boy, playful and ambitious. Sometimes he stole food from the stores, but it was difficult for the mothers to discover it.

He even used to spend whole nights in the bush if he was angry or slighted."¹² Entered as evidence before the Carter Land Commission in 1932, Kenyatta recalled his first meeting with a European.

"Did you see no European when you were a boy?"

"No. The first European I saw was one who nearly killed my father. My father was appointed a chief or sub-chief--I do not quite know which--and he returned from his place near Dagoretti to Ng'enda, and became a chief, and the first European I saw was a European who quarrelled with my father. The European became very angry and he tried to shoot my father."

"Was he a settler?--"He was a settler."

"That was before you went to school?--"Yes."¹³

At about the age of 13, Kenyatta was hospitalized at the Church of Scotland Mission (Currently PCEA) where he had his leg operated on by the late J. W. Arthur. Kenyatta was baptized Johnstone Kamau by the Rev. Sutter, in August 1914 at the Kikuyu mission station where he stayed for several years. While at the mission, Kenyatta assisted in the first translation of the New Testament into Kikuyu.¹⁴ He also

¹² Ibid., 20-27.

¹³ Ibid., 27.

¹⁴ Ibid.

worked as a cook for his keep.

Perhaps the missionary John Arthur, a medical doctor, saved Kenyatta's life. But he later became a deadly enemy of Kenyatta due to the assumption that Christianity and western culture went together. Not only was Dr. John Arthur against Kenyatta for opposing his views but he was so obsessed with the issue of female circumcision that he lost 99 percent of the CSM communicants.

A page from Arthur's diary reads: "It is now 1 p.m. (sic): so to bed. Joseph Kang'ethe and Johnstone Kenyatta deserve to be hanged...Sunday 29th Sept. 1929. J.W.A."¹⁵ Ng'ang'a Ngoro, later chairman of the Kikuyu land Board Association said, "I was a Christian. However, if the choice lay between God and the circumcision, we chose circumcision. But it is a false European choice."¹⁶

In February 1929, Kenyatta, left for England to present the claims of the real situation about the governments', missionaries' and settlers' corrupting and exploiting Kenya. The Governor discouraged him from making a wasted, fruitless journey. The Victorian colonies were to be seen on the map but not heard. The petition of Kenyatta deviously went through and his journey was not wasted.

¹⁵ Ibid., 44.

¹⁶ Ibid.

When Kenyatta returned to Kenya in September 1930, he was given a warm welcome as his prestige had been vastly increased by his travels. In April 1931, Kenyatta returned to England to further the Kenyan African people's cause for justice.

In 1946, Kenyatta came back to Kenya and was elected president of the Kenya African Union (KAU) in June 1947. KAU was accused of wanting to throw the Europeans into the sea. But Kenyatta claimed KAU sought obedience to the law and human rights. He kept busy as the principal of the independent Teachers Training College at Githunguri, a center of education and discussion on African political and social problems. Then he was arrested and detained while asleep at night along with eighty Africans under the colonial government emergency powers of October 20, 1952.¹⁷ Peter Evans, in his book, Law and Order cynically but perhaps realistically writes:

the auxiliary police were called up, the printing presses began to vomit more new emergency regulations, African opinion was silenced...curfews were proclaimed...and the rebellion was officially launched!¹⁸

Kenyatta and his colleagues were accused of being members of, and managing an unlawful society, the Mau Mau. British

¹⁷ Horwarth, 78.

¹⁸ Horwarth, 78.

justice in the trial could not prove there was such a thing as Mau Mau and consequently it was no justice at all.

Prosecution: You think Mau Mau is much better since you started denouncing it?

Kenyatta: You people have audacity to ask me silly questions. I have done my best and if all other had done as I have done, Mau Mau would not be as it is now. You made it what it is, not Kenyatta.¹⁹

When there was no evidence in the Kenyatta trial and detention, the government bribed Rawson Macharia to testify against Kenyatta by offering him money, training facilities in England and security for his family. Kenyatta was described as the "African leader to darkness and death"²⁰ and was sentenced to seven years imprisonment. While Kenyatta and other leaders were in detention, there were suggestions to take measures for their "neutralization or liquidation" as political leaders.²¹ This was not done due to the fear of giving them unnecessary martyrdom.

Early in 1960, the Lancaster House Conference paved the way for the 1961 elections in which Kenyatta did not participate. The election proved that the large majority of Kenyan citizens believed in the mainstream of nationalism

¹⁹ Horwarth, 81.

²⁰ Horwarth, 95.

²¹ Kendal Ward [Executive Officer, Electors' Union], letter to the Chairman, Elected Members Organization, Nairobi, 7 August 1952.

(KANU) which Kenyatta represented. But the Governor, Sir Patrick Renison, desired the formation of a new government without Kenyatta. He was reluctant to release Kenyatta for reasons of security, and stability in the administration and economy. However, Kenyatta had become so popular that the government, by August 1961, released and returned him to a government-built house at Gatundu. He assumed the presidency of KANU in October 1961.

Kenyatta Harambee Era (1963-1978)

When Kenyatta was sworn in as Prime Minister in June 1963, he concluded his first speech by proclaiming, "I therefore give you the call--Harambee!" The word Harambee means pulling or pushing together for the common good. The concept of working together for development dominated Kenyatta's politics throughout the rest of his life. He strengthened Harambee by frequently teaching the Christian message of forgiveness and working closely together.

However, on July 5, 1969, Tom Mboya, then the minister of Economic Development and Planning, was assassinated in Nairobi. Mboya's death sparked off intense tribal feelings.

The period between 1969 and 1978 witnessed student demonstrations, closures of the Nairobi University and public attacks on the Kikuyu monopoly of power by Martin Shikuku and Joshua M. Kariuki, a Kikuyu ex-detainee.

Then in March 1975, J.M. Kariuki was arrested by government security officers and his dead body was found on Ngong Hills. No charges were brought. The opposition members of Parliament were arrested and there was a deadlock in Kenya's politics until Kenyatta finally died in office on August 23, 1978. Thus, Kenyatta's harambee, forgiveness and reconciliatory efforts included corruption, nepotism and elimination of his opponents. Daniel Arap T. Moi tried to set the harambee record right by introducing the philosophy of nyavoism--peace, love and unity.

Daniel Arap T. Moi's Nyavoism (1978-?)

Daniel Arap T. Moi, who is the current president of Kenya, began his term with a program of reform to purge Kenya's corrupt bureaucracy. Moi was educated by missionaries and had this to say:

...without the teachers and Christian missionaries, I would never have acquired my formal education, nor the Christian faith which has permanently reshaped my life.^{ee}

Equipped with his Christian background, Moi began the anti-corruption campaign which investigated malpractices, firing several senior police officers. The existing ethnic organizations were abolished and any ethnic implications were removed by 1980.

^{ee} Moi, xiv.

However, tribalism is a hard fact in Kenya. Recently, Moi branded Matiba and Rubia as tribalists and traitors.²³ Tribalism has become a code word and an acceptable way of expressing the specific fear of the larger tribes--Kikuyu in particular.²⁴ The Kikuyus are the most educated, experienced, resourceful, energetic, adaptable and modern tribe in Kenya.²⁵ But the country's intellectuals are the Luos and the Luhyas. They have the majority of professors, lawyers and doctors.²⁶ Moi comes from the small Kalenjin tribe and has led Kenya in an impressive way until the 1990s which appear to be a challenge for the whole country.

Nyayoism

Moi originally used the word Nyayo to mean following the foot marks of Mzee Njomo Kenyatta, the Founding Father of the Kenya Nation. In traditional Africa, following the footsteps of a hero was a mark of wisdom and a desire to be a hero. Since Moi wanted to be a hero in peacemaking, loving and uniting the country of Kenya, he let the meaning of the word nyayo evolve into peace, love and unity. Nyayoism embodies some elements of the biblical vision of

²³ Cited in the New Yorker, 3 September 1990, 96.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid., 98.

²⁶ Ibid., 98.

shalom which Moi describes as follows:

Nyayoism propounds a way of life. I know that it has three sources of origin. First, African socialism is our Kenyan ideology, as propounded on Sessional paper No. 10 of 1965. This African socialism is based on collective responsibility and on being mindful of the welfare of others. It practices a philosophy of unity of action, cooperative existence and sharing. In all that it proposes, supports and lives for, African socialism is an embodiment of peace, love and unity....²⁷

The philosophy of nyayoism refers to values, beliefs, and attitudes of the society as a whole. Persons in the society who have different values and ideologies like the anarchists, communists, socialists, conservatives, liberals, poor, rich, the illiterates and the elites, are expected to live in harmony with each other and the creation as a whole. Since their conditions and beliefs are different, they are expected to make an effort towards peace, love and unity.

The philosophy of nyayo increased the freedom of speech until Oginga Odinga criticized the government against land grabbers, the systematic plunder of national resources, mass unemployment and the US military presence in Kenya.²⁸ Moi was growing intolerant of criticisms and in 1982 made Kenya constitutionally a one-party state. Kenya was declared a one-party state on June 9, 1982. Since then, Kenya's

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

political stability and tranquility have been weakening slowly until it became obvious in 1990.

Elections in Question

Since the independence of Kenya from Britain in 1963, the Kenya Government has been very sympathetic to Christianity. Praise be to God for the great freedom to preach, for the receptiveness of the people and for the exciting growth of the church.²⁹ The church in Kenya has also become the voice of the people, especially when she senses the country heading in the wrong direction.

The 1986 government decision to change elections from secret ballot to queuing behind candidates made the Church leaders in Kenya generally uneasy. The leaders did not want to hurt the society for whom they conducted weddings, funerals, baptisms, and prayers by standing behind a candidate for election. The church took the democratic principles seriously and condemned the queuing system. Some citizens who were very proud of their voting cards and who had voted in every election since their independence would not vote as long as queuing existed.³⁰

Community Participation

The people must have allowance for political

²⁹ Johnstone, 265.

³⁰ Ibid.

participation in those decisions which affect their lives, and especially elections.

In "all democratic countries most citizens participate only marginally in political life, whether national or local."³¹ The interest of democracy is to shape a great living community. For "democracy is a name for a life of free and enriching communion...It will have its consummation when free inquiry is indissolubly wedded to the art of full and moving communication."³²

In 1948, Charles Ferguson in his rather unremarkable book, A Little Democracy is a Dangerous Thing, wrote:

the citizens opportunity for taking an active part in the major decisions that are made all about him have if anything lately diminished, and in one of the most crucial moments of history, he finds himself cut off from the very processes designed to control his destiny.³³

It is a serious disappointment to see the essence of community absent from a society and the creative members of the society not participating in the development of a

³¹ Robert Dahl and Edward Tufte, Size and Democracy (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1973), 60.

³² John Dewey, The Public and its Problems (Denver: Alan Swallow, 1926), 184.

³³ Charles Ferguson, A Little Democracy is a Dangerous Thing (New York: Association Press, 1948), 12. Ferguson argues no provision is made for the "real participation of men and women in the business of running their communities, their businesses, or their country" (p. 117).

creative community. The community must act and decide to move towards a vision of usalama.

Political Activity

Aristotle viewed both happiness and misery as taking the form of action: the end for which we live is a certain kind of activity not a quality. Character gives us qualities, but it is in our actions that we are happy or the reverse.³⁴ For Aristotle happiness is the source of excellence (arete) that gives life its character, its pleasure, and its opportunity for immortality.³⁵ But all this keeps changing.

John Stuart Mill described the spirit of the age as the "age of transition" and the critical nature of the time as "pregnant with change."³⁶ This calls for different approaches, ways of thinking, or strategies rather than coherent systems of thought.

Mill's sense of praxis is that it is an activity that may result in either improvement or in maintaining the

³⁴ Wittman M. Philip, Participation in Technocratic Society: The Confrontation of Technical and Practical Activity as Theme and Strategy in Political Theory, Ph.D. Dissertation, Claremont Graduate School, 1981 (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1981), 42. Quoting from the Poetics, 1450a 17-19.

³⁵ Philip, 43, end notes.

³⁶ John Stuart Mill, "The Spirit of the Age," in Essays on Politics and Culture by John Sturat Mill, ed. Gertrude Himmelfarb (New York: Doubleday, 1962), 2.

conditions conducive to improvement. He has a strong sense of "arete" that excellence and competence for which everyone should strive. Exercise is needed for improvement.

The human faculties of perception, judgement, discrimination feelings, mental activity and even mere preference, are exercised only in making a choice. He gains no practice either in discerning or in desiring what is best. The mental and moral like the muscular powers are improved only in use.³⁷

For the full development of human powers, opinions and actions must be free and diversity must be promoted. In a review by the Daily Nation Newspaper³⁸ of a book entitled LET The DONKEY TALK by Jamlick Miano, (a church minister) the political and religious leaders are depicted as oppressors that are symbolically riding upon the backs of the people as if they were donkeys. The review points out the abuse of power, freedom and democracy by stealing from the poor in the name of cooperation while using soldiers and policemen to terrorize people.

Miano addresses himself to the problems of the African countries and the role the clerics have to play in this oppression. The pastors must take sides with and not against the citizens...the clergy have to acquire a creative resourcefulness to interpret and synthesize the trends of their societies and

³⁷ John Stuart Mill, "On Liberty." In The Six Great Humanistic Essays of John Stuart Mill, ed. Albert Levi (New York: Washington Square Press, 1963), 183.

³⁸ Cited in Daily Nation [Nairobi; newspaper], December 1990, n. p.

act on the peoples problems. The common people are living on their leaders shadows and their lives are concealed and organized by these leaders.³⁹

When the clergy engage in fruitless rhetoric and to collaborate with the politicians to grab land, money and power they end up creating more poverty, squatters, pimps, prostitutes and turning real human beings into some kind of dogs.⁴⁰

The vision of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa ought to be translated into a course of usalama that turns hate into love, war into peace, suffering into joy and mistrust into trust. The Church is called to turn life into celebration. So let it be. Celebrate!

Usalama is possible by the restoration of the intactness of a damaged or violated situation, especially in the communal, human and ecological condition--the reconciliation, the healing and the self-sufficiency in the community.⁴¹ Usalama comes as a result of teaching, pastoral care and counseling that transforms and empowers the spirit through tough love with justice.

Usalama makes it possible for the church to share the good news of the power and hope of the Kingdom of God by

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Rolf Knierim, class lectures, "Old Testament Theology of Righteousness and Justice," School of Theology at Claremont, Spring 1989.

teaching, preaching, helping, healing, and setting free the oppressed. Although the good news is for all that come to the Lord, it appears that its power is for those who are powerless, its intelligence for those at the bottom, its liberty for the oppressed, its wealth for the poor and the victims of poverty. The God of this good news is not the God of the masters but the one who takes sides with the poor. The rich speak of God in order to better oppress the poor.⁴²

Listen to me, dear brothers: God has chosen poor people to be rich in faith, and the Kingdom of heaven is theirs, for that is the gift God has promised to all those who love him. And yet, of the two strangers, you have despised the poor man. Don't you realize that it is usually the rich men who pick on you and drag you into court? And all too often they are the ones who laugh at Jesus Christ, whose name you bear. James 2:5-7 LB

Usalama is ethical. It rejects the injustice of the wealthy towards the poor. The moral principles in most of Africa have a communal dimension. Whatever the members of the community do contribute to the calamity or the welfare of the entire community. The Meru People say, Ngi imwe niyo voragia muthuri (It takes just one fly to spoil the whole soup). The Ibo of Nigeria say, "if one finger brought oil it soiled the others." Politically, power as a moral value

⁴² Gustavo Gutierrez, The Power of the Poor in History (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1983), 19.

must be handled carefully. "Power is like holding an egg in the hands. If you hold it too tightly it breaks and if you hold it too loosely it drops."⁴³ Morality is viewed in terms of the common good.

If usalama is to be alive, it has to be loving. The subject of love is so complex that it includes the love of sounds, smells, familiar sites, old acquaintances, relatives, opposite sex, animals, ideals, heroics, books, home, landscape and one's country.

The role of the church is to communicate the gospel of love in deed and word. What does the Gospel permit the church to teach and to do? Where does this lead the church and the society? As we have seen, the communication and expression of God's love became a reality in the incarnation story. When the role of the church becomes incarnational, the church becomes real and credible to the real world. The church frequently occupies many roles at the same time. She is involved in the building of schools, hospitals and initiating agricultural projects as well as many types of handcraft industries.

In such cases, the Church is frequently in multiplex relationships with the same people that the state is serving. Often there are conflicting expectations between

⁴³ Opoku, 162.

the church's and the state's roles. The church is not a politico-religious expert versus the state as a political expert. She does not have her medical and educational experts competing against those of the state. She cooperates with the state in Harambee-Nyayoism, that is, in the spirit of sharing, giving and taking, each contributing what each has to offer and allowing the other to contribute.

However, the state has her expectations with regard to the role of the Church. The Church also has her expectations in terms of the earned and achieved duties and responsibilities of the state. There are times when the Church may accept or reject some political roles of the state if they are in conflict with the common good. When and where this takes place, it must not be misinterpreted as the church against the government but as the church playing her justifiable prophetic role in search of common societal peace, love and unity. Consequently, the role of the church possesses the possibility for developing deep friendship with the state.

The church as the community of the incarnate God has to be incarnate among the poor, the sick, the ignorant, the landless and the homeless for the transformation of their lives and environments. In the incarnational story God became both human and divine (John 1:14). Incarnation must mean that God feels the agonies of the nations, He is

sensitive to the human market, family, church, government, and party institutions. God detects the waves of injustice from the unexpected corners of human cultural domains of economic, social, political, legal and religious life. He operates in the context of the totality of life and history of which you are an inalienable part."⁴⁴

The incarnate God has broken in on earth and is found among people, and especially in the churches. The churches must continue in the active work of the Holy Spirit in the world today and in the lives of its people. The spirit of God compels us to love and to do justice to all people.

Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless;
maintain the rights of the poor and
oppressed. Rescue the weak and needy;
deliver them from the hand of the wicked.
(Psalms 82:3-4 N.I.V.)

The Church is called to be a community of justice and a priesthood of believers functioning within respective hermeneutical communities. The Church's role is to deal justly with all the human diversities, theologies, ideologies, beliefs, assumptions, feelings, desires, sentiments, values, decisions and allegiances within their communal historical contexts.

The life in the Church is largely corporate. Communal

⁴⁴ Song, 46.

salvation is as true in the church as it was in ancient Israel. The sins of a nation tend to harm the souls of even those who have not participated actively in those sins. This implies unity. Such unity and freedom will mean responsibility to each other for no one should be hungry, naked, homeless, and thirsty when others have water, shelter, clothing and food. Unity means sharing resources in order to reduce the degrees of restlessness, discouragement, gloom, anxiety, depression and shame.

Africa needs leaders with a vision of a land in which her sons and daughters can freely move from shore to shore, mountain to mountain and desert to desert. Africans ought to dream a new dream of a new land in which the citizens shall not need passports, visas, border inspections and change of currencies as they move, visit, trade, and grow in their own homes. Africa needs to be what God meant it to be, a continent freely given to the Africans to walk it, cultivate it, plant it, tend it and keep it.

So, Africans shall unite, for it is written in Psalms

133:

Behold how good and how pleasant it is for
brethren to dwell together in unity! It is
like the precious ointment upon the head,
that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's
beard: that went down to the skirts of his
garments;

As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.

It was the unity of the ordinary Afro-Americans that helped the great Afro-American hero, Martin Luther King, Jr., to shape the human rights movement in America. Africa needs the unity of ordinary men, women, students, professionals and politicians in order to be blessed and to have a life of usalama (wholeness). Over twenty-five years ago, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of Ghana, West Africa, called for a United States of Africa.⁴³ He wanted the African people to develop a unifying perspective that they were all one and the same people.

King believed in a free, whole and united America, one in which the walls of separation brought on by legal and de facto segregation, and discrimination based on ethnicity, could be eradicated. It has been written that Dr. King was supra ethnicity, supra nation, supra denomination, supra class, supra culture and that he belonged to the world and human kind.⁴⁴

If Africans could have faith in their society, they could play a more powerful economic, political, and communal

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Office of Black Student Affairs, Claremont Colleges [Claremont, Calif.], "In the Spirit of a United World," Newsletter 5, no. 4 (December 1990/January 1991): n. p.

role in the world affairs. As it is recorded in 1 Cor.

12:24-26:

God has adjusted the body...that there may be no discord in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.

Calvin affirmed that all human beings are one flesh, so much so that we feel one another's needs and hurts.⁴⁷ "The spiritual grounding of solidarity is in response to God's steadfast love for us and all creation."⁴⁸ The gifts in the body of Christ (Church) are for the common good of the church, the community and all creatures. The eco-justice crisis is due to the oppression of the poor and the creation which is a violation of the harmony and solidarity of the earth. Solidarity reminds us that:

community, love and justice cost something. It presses Christians to stand with the One for others, Jesus Christ, and to share his sufferings in the world that is being reconciled to God.⁴⁹

Unity arises from the realization that a person though righteous, could lose salvation through the faults of the nation or the family or even others. A father could bring a

⁴⁷ Presbyterian Church (USA), Committee on Social Witness Policy, Keeping and Healing the Creation (Louisville: PCUSA, 1990), 76.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 78.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 79.

curse on his children (2 Sam. 21:1-14), a king on his subjects (2 Sam. 24), or an unknown sinner could bring guilt on the entire community (Deut. 21:1-9). On the other hand, ten righteous would have saved Sodom (Gen. 18:32). Ezekiel held that five-and-twenty could defile the whole nation (8:16). A community is on the verge of collapse if no radical, exciting unity is feasible.³⁰

Conclusion

The Presbyterian Church of East Africa, like other Churches, has made a major contribution to the leadership of Kenya. At times Christians have regarded politics as a dirty worldly game. They have left the world to set the political goals, design the economic structures for them, make and change laws for the country, conduct elections and choose the worldly leaders. However, the Church has indirectly helped to mold the political thought and development in Kenya.

Kenyatta's harambee led to forgiveness, national reconciliation and healing. But the political assassinations that took place during his leadership created national uncertainty as to how to respond to his teachings and leadership approach. Moi's teaching about peace, love

³⁰ Richard J. Bernstein, Praxis and Action: Contemporary Philosophies of Human Activity (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971), 50.

and unity deserves credit. It assured Kenyans that everything was going well as long as they followed the footsteps of peace, love and unity. But there are uncertainties as to his approach to peace, love and unity.

However, the philosophies of working together for the common good in peace, love and unity may eventually spread to the rest of Africa if the Kenyan people stick to their principles and philosophies. Usalama theology suggests more than just following a human philosophy. It suggests following God's footsteps of peace, love and unity. The Psalmist writes:

If you make the most high your dwelling--
even the Lord who is my refuge--then no harm
will befall you, no disaster will come near
your tent. For He will command His angels
concerning you to guard you in all your ways;
they will lift you up in their hands, so that
you will not strike your foot against a
stone. (Psalms 91:9-12)

The nation may want to remember that the God who led her through the colonial struggles into freedom and progress is still interested in her usalama. In her national journey with God, Kenya needs to go to God and pray:

If I have walked with falsehood, and my foot
has hastened to deceit; (Let me be weighed in
a just balance, and let God know my
integrity!) (RSV Job 31:5)

CHAPTER 8

Towards a Theology of Usalama

The primary vision of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa has been preaching of the gospel, healing the sick, teaching the people and industrializing the society. It is the attempt of this chapter to suggest a theology of usalama as an attempt to widen and sharpen the vision of the church by highlighting the communal and ecological dimensions of the church in society.

What is Theology of Usalama?

The theology of usalama is about wholeness for the hurting poor, powerless, underprivileged and oppressed communities. It is likely to develop a wide audience and participants from daily African life, families, institutions, Churches and nations. The author hopes that some brilliant African theologians will research and construct a concrete theology of usalama that confronts the challenging but critical tasks that arise from the African Church.

Africans

The vision of the European missionaries held that African were a second class humanity. But all the human

beings on the surface and above the planet earth are all creatures of God (Gen. 2.4 ff.). "The Lord God formed man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life" (Gen. 2.7). "The bond of life between man and earth given by creation is expressed with particular cogency by the use of the Hebrew words "adam" and "adamah."¹ As Bruggerman puts it: "human connectedness to the land is suggested by a play on words." "Adam," that is humankind, has a partner and mate "adamah (land)."² Tribble names "adam as" the earth creature "in order to underscore the relationship between humanity and earth."³ Humanity was taken from the ground, is dust, and will return to dust (Gen. 3.19). Plants and animals were also formed by God out of the ground (Gen. 2.9, 19). "Humans are earth, they share its nature with its soil, its plants, its animals."⁴

Hunt disputed the claim that there was a common humanity that shares a common earth. Hunt wrote:

¹ G. Von Rad, Genesis: A Commentary. Rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster, [1973]), 77.

² W. Brueggemann and L. Weber, eds., Land, Fertility and Justice (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1987), 41.

³ Phyllis Tribble, God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1978), 78.

⁴ L. Wilkinson, Earthkeeping: Christian Stewardship of Natural Resources (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 208.

(1) There is a good reason for classifying the Negro as a distinct species from the European as there is for making the ass a different species from the zebra; and if in classification, we take the intelligence into consideration, there is a far greater difference between the Negro and European and between the gorilla and Chimpanzee. (2) That the analogies are far more numerous between the Negro and the ape than between the European and the ape. (3) That the Negro is inferior intellectually to the European. (4) That the Negro becomes more humanized when in his natural sub-ordination to the European than under any other circumstances. (5) That the Negro race can only be humanized and civilized by Europeans. (6) That European civilization is not suited to Negro's requirements or character.⁵

It is a mistake of church history that theologians and preachers alike have neglected to figure out what to do with God's creation. What things are to be done on earth that will bring out the best results for usalama? Long before Hunter wrote down his harmful understanding of Africans, the Africans:

knew how to build houses, govern empires, erect cities, cultivate fields, mine for metals, weave cotton, forge steel...Their religion had its own beauty, based on mystical connections with the founder of the city. Their customs were pleasing, built on unity, kindness, respect for age. No coercion, only mutual assistance, the joy of living, a free acceptance of discipline. Order-earnestness-Poetry-Freedom....⁶

⁵ J. Hunt, "On the Negro's Place in Nature," Memoirs of the Anthropological Society of London, 1863-1864, 26-27, 51-52.

⁶ Aime Cesaire, quoted in John S. Pobee, Toward an African Theology (Nashville: Abingdon, 1979), 61.

Gwinyai H. Muzorewa suggested that it was possible to establish continuity between African traditional life and the new faith; (2) to help restore the African sense of humanity, dignity, and identity; (3) to respond with a meaningful interpretation and involvement in the changing socio-political African situation; and (4) to establish an African theology of mission.⁷

There is urgency to establish a theological mission of usalama by (1) following justice in the community, (2) loving God's creation. The writer's experience as a minister in poor conditions witnesses to the need for usalama.

Poor Majengo Ghetto

Esther Wanjia, a poor elderly lady and a church member from the Majengo (Slums) of Nanyuki, represents not the poverty of majengo but the wealth of love from the majengo community, the relationship of the majengo community to their neighbors and their environment.

In the Bible the poor are part of a social group; they are the poor or lowly of the land. They are a people: poor, harassed, robbed of the fruit of their labor, and oppressed by injustice.⁸

⁷ Muzorewa, 98.

⁸ Sergio Torres and John Eagleson, eds. The Challenge of Basic Christian Communities (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1981), 112.

Wanja came from an apathetic, powerless and isolated majengo community in order to reach her pastor, and community with love. She was not educated in pastoral care, theology, exegesis and homiletics. Yet, she also prepared her sermons to reach a pluralistic Swahili congregation; and then Wanja visited Nanyuki District hospital to pray with the sick.

Wanja's love was inclusive and looked beyond ethnicity, denomination and class. She was able to live in an environment of majengo where alcohol, prostitution and violence were rampant. She shared the gospel of love, justice, and healing because she was fully aware that a commitment to diversity was crucial in building bridges in a world that was filled with ethnic, economic and political uncertainty.

Wanja had the quality of meeting complex new challenges with empathy. Like Wanja, Christians ought to see things differently, have visions of new strategies or patterns in everyday thought and deed. Their flexibility of thought fosters flexibility in their behavior.

It was out of the solidarity with the community that Wanja learned how to live abundantly even though she had less than what she needed for herself. She avoided being a thief and a robber like many decent looking Christians who steal from the Lord by not giving to the Lord what belongs to the Lord. Malachi 3:8 asks, "Will a man rob God?" He

then answers, "Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee?" In tithes and offerings." Wanjia was a good and faithful steward whose argument could be as follows:

When someone steals a man's clothes we call him a thief. Should we not give the same name to one who could clothe the naked and does not?" The bread in your cupboard belongs to the hungry man; the coat hanging unused in your closet belongs to the man who needs it; the shoes rotting in your closet belongs to the man who has no shoes; the money which you hoard up belongs to the poor.

-Basil the Great Bishop of Caesarea, C. 365. ⁹

Wanjia used her money made from selling her produce from Mt. Kenya forest for church offerings and for making the sweaters for her friends in the community. Money flowed daily into and out of her life, bringing with it a mix of vitality, fear, power, guilt, idolatry, distraction and enrichment.¹⁰ But Wanjia used it for herself, her community and her church.

Wanjia stretched out her hand to touch her neighbors, her pastor and her community with love. She invited her pastor and the community to the slums of scarcity, needed a full life of growth, peace and love. She wanted the slum community nurtured rather than exploited.

⁹ Doris Janzen Longacre, Living More With Less (Scotdale, Penn.: Herald Press, 1980), 13.

¹⁰ Ibid.

The standard of the exploiter is efficiency; the standard of the nurturer is care. The exploiter's goal is money, profit; the nurturer's goal is health-his land's health, his own, his family's, his community's, his country's...The exploiter wishes to earn as much as possible by as little work as possible; the nurturer expects, certainly, to have a decent living from his work, but his characteristic is to work as well as possible. The competence of the exploiter is in organization; that of the nurturer is in order... the exploiter typically serves an institution or organization; the nurturer serves land, household, community, place. The exploiter thinks in terms of numbers, quantities, "hard facts"; the nurturer in terms of character, condition, quality, kind...the exploitive always involves the abuse or the perversion of nurture.¹¹

Wanja desired a dynamic nurturing ministry from the church to the Majengo ghettos. By breaking the bread together and drinking from the same cup together, we shared in the same covenant and vision. We healed each other, as we shared our friendships, joys and sorrows.

Although Wanja wanted the pastor to baptize the children from the majengo single families, the fundamentalist church elders viewed the Majengo kids as the "offsprings of prostitution" or "the devil." The pastor wondered what was the purpose and meaning of baptism. He was always challenged by the words of Jesus when he said:

Let the children come to me, do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God.

¹¹ Wendell Berry, The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture (New York: Avon Books, 1978), 7-8.

If the children already belonged to the kingdom what was to be excluded from them? The universal love of Jesus Christ was so unique that Jesus accepted all children, from all classes, all cultures and all religions. It was the responsibility of the Church with all its "macrostructural"¹² dimensions (economic domination, dependence, exploitation) and diversity, to show love and care and to recognize the children being baptized as members of the family of God. These kids would form a new community.

A new community out of Majengo ghettos would foster harambee for sharing available resources; for developing fellowship with God and all the other creatures; for working together as companions on local, national and global issues; for healing the hurt, sick, homeless and miserable neighbors; for a harambee with community organizers, economic justice advocates, environmentalists, workers, business people, educators, economic representatives, politicians and labor leaders to envision and articulate the systematic changes that must come, and to identify next-steps to take in mission.¹³

¹² Abraham, 106.

¹³ Presbyterian Church (USA), Keeping and Healing the Creation, 79.

Food From the Forest

Wanja and many other members of the community got their food from tilling Mt. Kenya forest reserves where she had a permit to plant potatoes, beans, maize and vegetables for her survival. It was not only Wanja but many of the author's parishoners that earned their livelihood from the proceeds of forest farming. After their squatter life ended with the colonial era, many of the Nanyuki parishoners turned to the forests for survival. They had not received justice from the colonial farmers as well as from their own independent society.

The pastor felt that justice to human beings was inseparable from right relationships within the natural order. Eco-justice meant justice to all of God's creation."¹⁴ All social problems were interrelated and communal justice could not be separated from ecological justice. Paul, in Rom. 8: 22-23, declares:

We know the whole creation has been groaning
in travail together until now; and not only
the creation, but we ourselves...

Although the food from Mt. Kenya rain forests feed thousands of poor children, men and women, it is to be admitted that forest farming is a major cause of deforestation. The peasant farmers clear and burn sections

¹⁴ Ibid., 2.

of the forests in order to plant crops. Then they carry firewood home because millions of Kenyans rely on forest wood to heat their homes and to cook their meals. Each year, Africa loses forests at the rate of 29 to 1 hectares, while Asia loses at the rate of 5 to 1.¹⁵

Within 25 years 9 countries are expected to lose all of their closed forests (that is, those with continuous canopy); and another 13 will lose all of theirs within 50 years, unless effective steps are taken to conserve them.¹⁶

Fuel wood, and logging for timber will deforest the land unless it is managed efficiently and sustainably. The forests of the land need to be cared for. In Ps. 104: 16:

The trees of the Lord are watered abundantly,
the cedars of Lebanon which (God) planted.

When the forests are maintained, the usalama of creation is at its best; havoc is at its worst when forests are removed and flooding and soil erosion are left to ruin the land. The Judeo-Christian Bible records the complex reactions among God, the Land and Israel. Many people have deep emotional ties to their land. Deuteronomy 20:19 reads:

When thou shalt beseige a city for a long
time, in making war against it to take it,
thou shalt not destroy the trees thereof by
forcing an axe against them: for thou mayest

¹⁵ Presbyterian Church (USA), Keeping and Healing the Creation, 8.

¹⁶ United Nations, The Disappearing Forests
Environmental Program Brief No. 3, [Nairobi], n. p.

eat of them, and shalt not cut them down(for the tree of the field is man's life) to employ them in the seige.

The humanity is not free to destroy anything. The things around humans were lent to them by God. If they ruin or use them unwisely, they commit treachery against the world, they murder, rob and destroy God's property.

Lots of good resourceful soils are being eroded by overgrazing among the nomadic communities. A good example are the Maasai people, among whom PCEA extended its mission.

Mission to Nomadic Maasai

The appearance of the Maasai have been described as follows:

Physically they are among the handsomest of mankind, with slender bones, narrow hips and shoulders and most beautifully rounded muscles and limbs.¹⁷

The tragedy about the Maasai comes with droughts which wipe out cattle and therefore food, milk and blood for the Maasai. At such periods send the gospel, food, water, clothing, medicine and education to the Maasai Mission (Nendeni) areas of Kemancho and Dol-Dol. When there are plenty of rains, these are green pastures, but the Maasai flocks chew up vegetation by the roots, dig up the soil with their hoofs and cause enormous soil erosion at their

¹⁷ Saitoti Ole Tepilit and Carol Beckwith, Maasai (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1980), 17.

locations in Laikipia District. Desertification is more suited to grazing livestock than to growing crops.¹⁸ Among the Maasai, the soil is going away and what is being left is like a:

skeleton of a sick man, all the fat and soft earth having now wasted away and only the bare framework of the land being left.¹⁹

The soil erosion caused by overgrazing is the great price Kenya is paying for a nomadic lifestyle. Traditionally, the Maasai nomadic life did not cause desertification but permitted the vegetation to maintain itself despite climatic constraint. But the Maasai were pushed by the Europeans from the fertile grasslands to dry lands where soil erosion is rampant.

The Maasai populations have increased and they want to enlarge their herds to the maximum because their wealth is measured by their numbers of livestock. The more the mouths to feed the more the grass is denuded and the more the soil is exhausted. The more the goats and camels eat the trees and shrubs, the more the winds blow and the soil is blown.

Broken Earth

The land is broken, its beauty is gone, its humanity is impoverished, its biosphere is threatened, its dust is

¹⁸ Presbyterian Church (USA), Keeping and Healing the Creation, 8.

¹⁹ Freudenberger, 21.

increased, and its respiratory ailments are multiplied. If the soil is valuable, then there must be a reverential understanding of the land and an ethic to curb down the soil degradation. Lowdermilk suggested the eleventh commandment that reads:

Thou shalt inherit the Holy earth as a faithful steward, conserving its resources and productivity from generation to generation. Thou shalt safeguard thy fields from soil erosion, thy living water from drying up, thy forests from desolation, and protect thy hills from overgrazing by thy herds, that my descendants may have abundance forever. If any shall fail in this stewardship of the land, thy fruitful fields shall become sterile stony ground and wasting gullies, and thy descendants shall decrease and live in poverty or perish from off the face of the earth.²⁰

Rural Peasant Congregations

The earth is in trouble not only among the nomadic people, but also in the rural areas where poor peasants are trying to survive. The peasant families have an average of eight people, who eat from the land, till the land, eliminate trees, cultivate on the slopes without proper terracing, use inexperienced irrigation, overwork the soil, and grow their food on marginal hillside land. They grow potatoes, wheat, beans, maize, oats, onions, and peas. They keep small numbers of sheep, goats and cattle. While the livestock requires mineral salts, spray dips and medicines,

²⁰ Ibid., 23.

the farming requires fertilizers, pesticides and machinery.

The heavy machinery, fertilizers, and pesticides of export agriculture degrade the fertile land, and overuse by the poor degrades the hillside land. If economics and agriculture were geared to eco-justice, the highest priority would be given to the policies and technologies of good tilling and careful keeping, so that the people would be fed and the land kept healthy.²¹

The Christians must know it is a sin to misuse or destroy what they did not make. The degradation of peasant and farmlands in Kenya, the loss of the best soil, the overworking of the soil makes it difficult for the continuing capacity of food production to keep up with population growth.

Sabbatical Fallow

A sabbatical year was instituted to rest and restore land every seventh season, and jubilee year was declared every fifty years to redistribute the land and restore it to the original land owning family. During the sabbath, no technology of planting, cultivation or harvesting was to be used; only what could be gathered naturally was to be harvested and if the wild and domestic inhabitants of the land could not find enough to eat the landholder was to open his barn and share its foodstocks with them. The purpose of the sabbath years and related tithe offerings of first

²¹ Ibid., 8.

fruits (Deut. 26:10) or first born (Exod. 22:30) and gleaning (Lev. 19:9-10) was to acknowledge God's ownership of the land and its nature as a divine gift for the benefit of all.

The practice of fallow seasons was probably adopted from Canaanite agricultural communities which recognised the wisdom of periodic rest for the land to ensure its continued productivity. Today, with the accumulating toxicity of mineral fertilizers and soil compaction by heavy machinery, the ancient wisdom of fallow periods may need to be rediscovered if the land is to be a human partner and not an adversary.

The land is often personified in the Hebrew Scriptures. For example the earth "answers" (Hosea 2:22) "opens its mouth" (Num. 16:30) "hearkens" (Micah 1:2) "hears" (Jer. 22:29) "cries out" (Job 31:38) "enjoys its sabbaths" (2 Chr. 36:21) "makes a joyful noise to the Lord" (Ps. 66:1) "mourns" (Is. 24:4) "devours and bereaves" (Ezek. 36:13) or "vomits out" (Lev. 18:25).

The land is God's agent of blessing rewarding righteous human behavior with good rains and crops (Deut. 11:13-15; Ps. 72:1-26, 16) or God's agent of judgement and curse on wicked, selfish behaviour (Deut. 11:1-16); Amos 4:7-10.

Wise methods of stewardship are part of a larger response to God's convenating love. When we respond in obedience we will enjoy

the fruit of the earth and the poor will be cared for. When we turn from God we can expect ecological disaster and social oppression.²²

God's gift of the land in covenant to the people of Israel was conditional on their respecting God's ownership and the lands's integrity. The message of the Old Testament is that the people of Israel chose to possess the land as their own and therefore lost it. This is a world of promise and peril for the humanity of today. John Muir, a pioneer of "righteous landscape management in the USA at the turn of this century describes as follows the persuasive ecological intermingling that comes out of the passages we have been considering:

Bears are made of the same dust as we, I breathe the same winds and dring the same waters. A bear's days are warmed by the same sun, his dwellings are overdomed by the same blue sky, and his life turns and ebbs with heart-pulsing like ours, and has been poured from the same First fountain. Whether he goes to our stingy heaven or not, he has terrestrial immortality.²³

In Kenya, just like elsewhere on the planet earth, it may be observed:

²² W. Dyrness, Stewardship of the Earth in the Old Testament in Tending the Garden (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 64.

²³ S. Fox, John Muir and His Legacy: The American Conservation Movement (Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1981), 374.

For the first time in the history of creation the life support systems of the planet earth are being destroyed by human activities. Throughout history humans have caused locally significant damage to the environment, but never before have human numbers and actions combined to threaten the integrity of the entire planet.²⁴

Whenever Wanja brought to the pastor her sweet food prepared with the greens from her forest garden, she reminded him of those strange words of Berry who wrote:
To live we must daily break the body and shed the blood of creation. When we do this knowingly, lovingly, skillfully, reverently, it is a sacrament. When we do it ignorantly, greedily, clumsily, destructively, it is a desecration.²⁵

Economic conditions are worsening and the degradation of environment is on the increase. There is more tilling of the land without keeping it and the crisis is worsened by the overpopulation and unfair distribution of the fruits of tilling the land. The failure to distribute production equitably and to keep the land has resulted in the failure to love the whole creation. Today, the former squatters are not alone in the breaking of the forests. The rich "Nyayo Tea" farms are planted in the forests. The timber companies and lumbering individuals are also making their living out of the forests.

²⁴ G. O. Barney, ed., Global 2000 Report (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1989).

²⁵ W. Berry, The Gift of Good Land (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1981), 281.

Environmental degradation and social injustice are closely linked. The people who are hurt by unjust economic policies and practices are likely to be afflicted by a deteriorating environment. Structures of power and the posture of greed, carelessness, and ignorance that affront the dignity of vulnerable people, excluding them from full participation in the community and economic life, also threaten the integrity of natural systems, undercutting their capacity to nourish life on the planet.²⁴

The fragile green forests, the earth's physical environment and the earth's ozone hole, among other things, are threatened.

Holistic Life

The theology of usalama must understand and support actively the African cause for justice and wholistic lifestyle. The African lifestyle was closer to that of the Jews than to that of the apes. The Theology of usalama may, therefore, need to draw from the similar old King Solomon's holistic theology whose knowledge, insight and wisdom is portrayed in three thousand proverbs and more than a thousand songs. Solomon spoke of trees and plants, from the lebanon cedars to the hyssop that grows on walls; he talked about animals, birds, reptiles and fish. Kings all over the world heard of his wisdom and sent people to listen to him.

Solomon regarded nature as proceeding from God. Nature has value to God in itself and is capable of bearing witness

²⁴ Ibid.

to the glory of God. Psalm 104, portrays the world as being ordered and in harmony because of the continual care of its creator and sustainer; rocks, trees, birds, animals, and people are each important for their own sake.

All of them earth's creatures depend on you
 God to give them food why they need it you
 give it to them, and they eat it; you provide
 food, and they are satisfied. When your turn
 away their breath, they die and go back to
 the dust from which they came. But when you
 give new life to the earth. May the glory of
 the Lord last forever! May the Lord be happy
 with what he has made!

The Psalmist acknowledges the mystery of creation with its earthquakes and volcanoes.

Usalama is holistic and recognizes that the sweep of Old Testament literature is against any separation between nature and humanity. There is in fact no Hebrew word for "nature" or "creation" as a noun and, therefore, no such separate entity. All the elements of creation, all creatures including humanity are alike in their dependance on God.

In view of this usalama integrates all the dimensions of the ecosystem in order to form a stable environment for the whole creation. St. Francis of Assissi had a similar empathy with nature:

When he considered the origin of all things
 he would be filled with overwhelming pity and
 he called all creatures, no matter how lowly,

by the name of brother or sister because... they had sprung from the same original principle as himself.^{e7}

The development of usalama theology should bring the church close into contact with the African culture and the Bible, unlike the great western male theology which:

not only fails to correspond to reality as we observe it, but in this insistence upon dominion and subjugation of nature, encourages the most expletive and destructive instincts in man rather than those that are deferential and creative. Indeed, if one seeks license for those who would increase radioactivity, create canals and harbors with atomic bombs, employ poison without constraint, or give consent to the bulldozer mentality, there could be not better injunction than this text. Here can be found the sanction and injunction to conquer nature--the enemy, the threat to Jehovah.^{e8}

Usalama can make mistakes. But it should tolerate occasional failures as a necessary price. It should encourage the initiatives of research in usalama through science and technology. In order to promote communication, self-sufficiency, autonomy, and provide rewards for African innovators and security for those who might fail in their efforts. Usalama recognizes that:

Both our present science and our present technology are so tinctured with orthodox Christian arrogance toward nature that no

^{e7} R. Attfield, The Ethics of Environmental Concern (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983).

^{e8} Ian L. McHarg, Design with Nature (Garden City: Natural History Press, 1969), 26.

solution for our ecological crisis can be expected from them alone. Since the roots of our trouble are so largely religious, the remedy must also be essentially religious whether we call it that or not.²⁹

At the juncture the big question for usalama is: What is the African ecological or environmental ethic?" Is African Christianity disqualified from formulating such ethic?" The African theology is characteristic of spiritual productivity through the concern for the people. A theology of usalama must, underscore both the importance of each community and their environmental context. It is a theology that must be able to figure out what the African value system stands for, and take the theological process of value shaping seriously.

Theological values of Usalama are usually found in the African stories, myths, legends and metaphors. Usalama theologians are not ashamed of telling excellent stories, legends and myths in support of their basic beliefs. A theology of usalama knitts and spins African values to the patterns of environmental exploitation and their relationship to the human greed, population growth, capitalism and affluence.

Usalama recognizes that the African leaders do not know how to run the new western systems, but they believe that

²⁹ L. White, "The Historical Roots of our Ecological Crisis," Science 155 (1967): 1203-7.

they do. The African leaders are filled with praise stories of the profitableness of the acquired western values. But the same leaders have mismanaged and sometimes ruined the same values by their wellmeaning but misguided attempts to make the western values fit the old African corporate mold. Usalama, therefore, seeks for African cultural symbols that will work in an African setting. Just as the African culture would not work in the west, so the western culture cannot work in Africa.

Usalama may have much to offer in the present economic, social, and political crisis that accompany change in Africa. In the face of bewildering changes, the crisis breed bickering, division, blame or the feeling that "That is not my problem." The community can emerge out of crisis stronger if they pull together in harambee for the developments of ecologically sensitive theologies such as:

emerging directions of thought that are explicitly life-centered,

underemphasized traditions from the Bible and Christian Heritage,

new insights from other faiths and ideologies, recognizing the divine guidance is not limited to historical Christianity.³⁰

³⁰ J. McDaniel, "Christian Respect for the Integrity of Creation as Enriched by a Dialogue With Buddhism," Paper presented to the World Council of Churches, Annecy, France, 1988.

As a part of usalama, African theologians may have to reduce complexity and increase flexibility for the accomplishment of a free mission of usalama. Usalama theology will have to develop a vision of a simple form of a loosely knit ecumenism of all the religious systems.

There can be no usalama until there is a theology characterized by simultaneous loose/tight properties. The usalama theology suggests an ecumenism that combines the high levels of central control with substantial decentralization, autonomy and partnership. Usalama is possible only when the different religious believers accept each other's values and cultures, procedures of controls and systems.

If a theology of usalama has a widely shared vision, and if everyone is committed to the same mission of usalama, then there are theological differences that are to be ignored and there are theological similarities to be considered. Some differences are nowhere to be seen. The secret of success in usalama theology will be the elimination of all the differences that might frustrate the emergence of an African theology of cooperation for excellence.

When the usalama theology is growing and becoming a blessing to Africa and the world, conflicts will be reduced, pluralism will flourish, and the health of the eco-system in

African societies will be a success story. But the theology of usalama must capture the important biblical lessons that are close to the unity of humanity and the integrity of creation. The best biblical lessons do not separate nature and humanity, do not sanction human exploitation, but is a relationship redeemed by Christ.

The human beings and all the other creatures are blessed by the creator, the originator of all life. There is communion between humanity and the rest of the creation.

In the gift of creation God fulfills not only our needs but those of every living thing. He sets boundaries to the waters and establishes the earth; he sends streams in which the wild beasts can quench their thirst; he gives pastures to the cattle and bread to human beings; bestows wine and oil on them; plants trees for birds; places the wild beasts in the mountains; sets the moon to make the festivals; regulates darkness and light.³¹

The whole creation, therefore, ought to praise God with great joy as they serve God and celebrate the earth, the garden.

Let us be responsible for tending and caring for the land, remembering that it can never be a possession in the sense of a piece of private property. In profound thanksgiving let us sustain the fragile bond between the land, the people, and God, the creator.³²

Within this biosphere, the creation has always been together

³¹ Freudenberger, 11.

³² Ibid., 11.

and interdependent. Without the living organisms, such as the bacteria, fungi and lichens, there would be no soil and life as we know it. The soil becomes soil by being lived upon, and by the interaction of the air, water, light and life upon the rocks. The energy for this complex operation is furnished by the sun.³³

Similarly, the oil, gas and coal are the legacy to us of past sunshine stored below the surface of the earth. But it is more important that we eat and breathe than drive cars and heat homes. The soil is rewarding to good cultivation, vital for our present and future existence. Therefore, the gardener learns to shape the garden and not to exploit, diminish and destroy the land. We are entrusted to care for it, to keep it and till it. We are trustees not owners.³⁴

The usalama of those who are living today and the future of the human species must be held together constantly. Life cannot go on without the resources of sunlight, water and soil. If the living soil is degraded, neglected, exploited and most of it is gone through soil erosion, washing away of the top soil, the denuding of the forests, then the civilizations of the earth are gone too.

³³ Sanat K. Majumder, The Drama of Man and Nature (Columbus: Charles E. Merrill Publ., 1971), 88.

³⁴ Donald Imsland, Celebrate the Earth (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1971), 67.

Long time ago.

The Bible does not give humanity licence to exploit nature, which exists solely for human convenience as resource.

Usalama is a Choice of Life

The early chapters of Genesis describe a humanity which proved incapable of living in obedience to God and in harmony with nature. In the myth of the "fall" of Genesis 3 humanity chooses independence from God, an alienation which expresses itself in a silent, dogged struggle between man and soil.³³ God's covenant with nature (humanity and the other living beings) is renewed in Gen. 9:9-11.

And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth. And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.

In the New Testament, Jesus is portrayed as possessing a profound sense of the natural environment and lived in an intimate relationship with natural forces and environmental realities.³⁴ In Matt. 6:25-34, Jesus urges people to trust God in elementary matters. Look at the birds of the air,

³³ Rad, 94.

³⁴ G. R. Lilbourne, A Sense of Place: A Christian Theology of the Land (Nashville: Abingdon, 1989), 93.

says Jesus, they show no anxiety in what they do as if there was no God, 'yet you heavenly Father feeds them' (v 26).

From the Beatitudes, is Jesus injunction about God who:

makes his sun rise on the evil and good and
sends rain on the just and on the unjust.
(Matt. 5:44-45)

The sun and the rain do not discriminate or judge. They are the evidence of God's grace. In Mathew 8:20, Jesus is reported as saying:

Foxes have holes and birds of the air have
nests, but the son of Man has nowhere to lay
his head.

Lilbourne views Jesus as an "essentially homeless person, who is at home in all of the natural environment... For him the outdoors is never hostile, but is rather the place God's presence."³⁷

The loss of a sense of place and rootlessness is characteristic of many modern societies, and especially those who have lost the ability to live by faith in God the loving provider. The loss of roots makes people feel themselves to be alone and a prey to fear, shame and doubt. The experience is explained by Paul in Rom. 7:18-19.

For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh),
dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present
with me; but how to perform that which is good I
find not. For the good that I would I do not: but
the evil which I would not, that I do.

³⁷ Lilbourne, 95.

The feeling of "no good" is prevalent among many men and women of all ages; it is felt by those whose lives fall short of their hopes and dreams; it is felt by those who are caught in a web of poverty; it is felt from the suffering inflicted on world ecosystems. Paul acknowledges that humanity and nature are inextricably linked and human redemption in Christ will lead to salvation for the rest of creation.

The transformation of a world of creation distorted by people begins with the believing acceptance of the gospel by people.. by directing the saving event mainly toward people, before all other created things, the New Testament is reflecting what the old had already grasped when it saw man as having particular position and responsibility for the whole world of creation.³⁸

In the early church, a new creation begun in the transformed lives of people who could say with Paul "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me." This new community is pictured in Isaiah 11:6-9 thus:

Wolves and sheep will live together in peace, and leopards will lie down with young goats. Calves and lion cubs will feed together and little children will take care of them. Cows and bears will eat together and their calves and cubs will lie down in peace. Lions will eat straw as cattle do. Even a baby will not be harmed if it plays with a poisonous snake,... On Zion, God's sacred hill, there

³⁸ Odil Hannes Steck, World and Environment (Nashville: Abingdon, 1980), 266.

will be nothing harmful or evil. the land will be as full of the Knowledge of the Lord as the seas are full of water.

Jesus asked the man who'd languished beside the pool for thirty-eight years: "do you want to be healed?" (John 5:6) Today, the spirit of God asks, Do you want healing for yourself and your land?" God is asking us today in the same words addressed to the Hebrew people in Deut. 10:19:

I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Therefore choose.

If we choose life, God will lead us and our world through the dangerous years ahead toward a new harmonious community of usalama and peaceful creation.

Conclusion

The attempted theology of usalama yields some problems for individual pastors and for their churches. The pastors in stable churches or having a narrow vision concern themselves with the maintainance of the traditional theologies and their own personal survivals. The usalama theology underscores the importance of developing the dimensions of justice in community and in creation. The usalama theology suggests a holistic vision that integrates the gospel with the prophetic areas of justice in society and in creation.

The theology of usalama will continue to view humanity, along with the whole spectrum of flora and fauna as made

from the soil. Their relationships are good in God's eyes. Therefore, there cannot be a radical domination or separation between human beings and the rest of the creation. Healing and life can come to humanity through God's grace in Jesus Christ, that enables humanity to live in harmony with creation and with one another.

CHAPTER 9

Conclusion

A Vision of Usalama for Church Leadership

Make me a servant humble and meek
 To lift up the weak
 And may the prayer of my life always be
 Make me a servant today.¹

This is an appropriate prayer for public figures in church leadership. The pastors as public figures in a pluralistic society ought to be faithful witnesses with a vision of usalama in ministry. This concluding chapter addresses the fact that throughout the ministry of the Church there lies a cry for leadership towards usalama in the community and in creation.

The word "ministry" refers to the work of the ordained minister. The Presbyterian Practice and Procedure² defines ministry as "service" and minister as "servant." A minister in PCEA is a man or woman ordained to exercise the ministry of the word of God and sacraments.³ "It is

¹ La Habra Presbyterian Church, Bulletin, "Make Me A Servant," La Habra, Calif., 13 January 1991.

² Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Practice and Procedure, 48.

³ *Ibid.*, 48.

the duty of ministers to preach the word of God, to celebrate the sacraments, to declare God's message of pardon to penitent sinners, to build up the members of the Church in their most holy faith, to recall those who have fallen away, to evangelize the heathen and at all times to further the kingdom of God on earth."⁴

As the ministers play their special roles in society, they become fair-minded arbiters, builders of bridges between people, champions of worthy causes, upholders of justice, seekers of truth, guardians of the public welfare and voices of conscience in the community. The leaders' presence, and lifestyles are crucial for the wellbeing of the community and the wholeness of creation.

We have to ask, what are the rules and the standards by which to play in community and environmental arenas? What are the external influences? What is our power and influence? Who are our competitors and what are their goals? Do the leaders take sides or remain neutral? What is the cost of leadership actions? What are the short and long term costs and benefits? What are the issues and implications they have in the community? What are the strategic maneuvers? If the community is made of public factions, and interest groups, how do the interests of the

⁴ Ibid., 5.

Church differ from those of the public?

Usalama theology asks questions, discusses the answers and involves members of the community in a harambee to implement solutions. Thus, this project uses two key words, shalom for wholeness and vision for the ministry of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa. The words shalom and vision are an umbrella label for all that the Church is doing, or not doing, for the redemption or salvation of the society and its ecology.

The Hebrew word shalom is rendered in Swahili as usalama, which means wellbeing, completeness, prosperity, good health and sufficiency. Usalama theology is, therefore, complimentary to the development of the national philosophy of Harambee-Nyayoism, which this project terms as the "working together for the common good in peace, love and unity." Usalama theology seeks to facilitate a communal life of abundance, wholeness and sufficiency in the pursuit of the common good.

In this case, usalama is about church ministers healing the hurting relationships of African individuals, families and communities. The ministers help people to "face and handle the demands and difficulties, successes and failures, opportunities and challenges, decisions and commitments, joys and sorrows, pain and bereavement, and whatever other

exigencies and pleasures life presents."³

Throughout the gospels, Jesus is a role model for healing spiritually, physically and emotionally. Some examples are Luke 5:12-16; 7:2-10; 8:40-42, 43-48; Mark 5:22-24; and Matt. 9:20-22. In the book of Acts 3:1-10; 8:26-39; 9:10-19; 10:1-48; 13:6-12; 16:16-18; 24:10-27; 25:6-12; and 26:1-32; the apostles are teachers, healers and witnesses. Like the apostles, the ministers are leaders called to heal the community spiritually, mentally and physically. Healing for usalama can be planned or unplanned, scheduled or unscheduled, formal or informal.

The apostles healed people by the temple gate, in homes, jails, temples, and along the roads as they were led by the spirit. "We follow in order to lead. The Holy Spirit is the 'wheel within the wheel,'...Let us never think we are the big wheel. Pastors are important wheels, yes; but we are little wheels. The Big Wheel is the Holy Spirit."⁴

The Church ministers have to lead a new life in the spirit which is a life of repentance for the damage humanity has done to creation and its self. This is God's

³ Richard Stoll Armstrong, The Pastor-Evangelist in the Parish (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990), 71.

⁴ Ibid., 179.

liberating, transforming and awakening news. In Mark 1:15, Jesus summoned his hearers to repentance. Repentance and conversion is a socio-ecclesial reality⁷ that leads the converts to new communities, new fellowships, new hope, wholeness and freedom (Acts 4:12, 20). Conversion is a creative, liberating experience of a new life journey under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, the giver of life.

The ministers will recognize that the vision of usalama is complete and adequate because it is a holistic ministry. It involves discipleship, discernment, composition, conversation and listening. It is interpersonal witnessing rather than confrontational. Usalama does not make psychological assumptions that a person is so trapped in problems that the person is incapable of handling the situation. Usalama does not assume that theology is enough without some psychology or medical help. Usalama is holistic and is based on God who "is before all things," and in whom "all things hold together" (Col. 1:17).

The ministers, therefore, want to restore and renew all contemporary things back to the best of their past as well as, the best of their future. That means usalama leadership is essentially a move towards new forms of Church life. Usalama is a new missionary dimension that seeks to "hold

⁷ Orlando E. Costas, Liberating News (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 115.

all things together"--culture, ecology, wholeness and renewal of creation.

This mission is the central view of usalama life that takes a new direction with a new commitment to the wellbeing of creation and community. Usalama searches for a new society that lives the future now. Usalama seeks peaceful national and international healing for human life and all creation.

The leaders with a vision of usalama emphasize stewardship. In Gen. 1:26-30; 2:15-19, human beings are created to be God's stewards. Usalama takes seriously Paul's injunction that Christians are servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God (1 Cor. 4:1). We are trustees of God's gifts "for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world" (1 Tim. 6:7). The Pastors' task is to encourage discipleship among the people and encourage them to become faithful stewards.

As stewards, the bearers of usalama exercise compassion in the world, befriending the lonely, feeding the hungry, comforting the grieving, clothing the naked, visiting the prisoners, freeing the captives and sheltering the homeless. Usalama is praying for the needy and offering one's time, money and energy to perform acts of compassion on behalf of Christ. This has to be done with respect for those in need and a readiness to receive as well as to give.

Usalama leaders are empowered by the Holy Spirit to seek reconciliation, justice and peace. The justice displayed by the leaders should establish honesty in personal and public business; exercise power for the common good; support people who seek dignity, freedom and respect they have been denied; welcoming the stranger in the land; seek to overcome the disparity between rich and poor; bear witness against political oppression and exploitation; redress the wrongs against individuals, groups, and people in the Church, nation and world. There is no peace without justice. Wherever there is brokenness, violence, and injustice the people of God are called to peacemaking.

Usalama calls upon leaders to care for creation, preserve life, sustain the earth, reshape it, replenish it and renew it. Leaders have to be careful how they use power. Richard N. Adams' theory of power defines power as control over elements of environment, territory, social relations and energy.² Power can be granted, allocated or delegated.

Adams further argues that human leadership and structural order is imposed upon the physical nature of a group or population that shares political, economic, social and energetic power. The eco-system, that is, the wider

² Richard N. Adams, Energy and Structure (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1975), n. p.

sphere from which the power system draws resources, is affected by human consumption, destruction, and control over production and consumption of goods.⁹

The people of God are called to use the earth responsibly, without plundering, polluting, or destroying; work with and for responsible attitudes and practices in procreation and reproduction; use and shape earth's goods to create beauty, order, health and peace in ways that reflect God's love for all creatures.

The usalama leaders are saints and witnesses who create a loving, caring climate of evangelism. "Evangelizing is the storytelling of God's saving message as it has become an integral part of our lives as people of faith."¹⁰ This includes caring for creation, transformation and the renewal of communities. Orlando asserts that "theology and evangelization are two interrelated aspects of the life and mission of the Christian faith. Theology studies faith; evangelization is the process by which it is communicated."¹¹

Usalama leaders teach people to be evangelists, educationists, worshipers and agape lovers as essential

⁹ Adams, 127-183.

¹⁰ Costas, 71.

¹¹ Ibid., 1.

ingredients of usalama. Agape love ensures the service and stewardship of humanity and creation, and thus, the extension of the kingdom of God.

Motivated by agape love, the usalama leaders share their vision just like Jesus shared his vision with the twelve disciples (Matt. 10:1). Moses also shared his work with the judges (Exod. 18:13-27). The aim is to inspire church members to become leaders with a vision of usalama. In the final analysis, usalama becomes a harambee of responsibilities in which everyone helps everyone else to discover their gifts, develop and use them to enhance wellbeing in the church and in the world.

The task of usalama is to serve the world out of love. Leaders learn much about love from Jesus who loved the world so much that he did not control the world but gave love and service to the world (Matt. 23:1-10; John 13:12-17). Thus, the biblical concept of "over" in "overseer" is problematic. Some church leaders conceive of themselves as bosses (anene) while others think of themselves as servants (ntungata).

The major difference between anene and ntungata is how they view the Church. The bosses tend to think rationally or humanistically. They sometimes resort to politics as a last result. They conduct political Church campaigns of all manners, sometimes using the tactics and methodologies of the secular world just in order to get power or to maintain

power. They value titles such as deacon, elder, pastor, reverend, doctor and bwana more than service. These may be likened to those that Luke 22:24 describes as follows:

And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. And he (Jesus) said unto them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors."

The ntungata, on the other hand, are able to see all dimensions of the church life, including the often neglected social, ecological and symbolic dimensions of the church. The ntungata are not just Church custodians. They have visions of new things, strategies, and patterns in day to day life. They are flexibly consistent, tender, sensible, political and goal-oriented. They are the people with a vision for today and for the future. What they are witnessing now is just the tip of what the future holds. But for the now, their ministry is to "say whatever is given you in that hour, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy spirit" (Mark 13:11). The ntungata are really the servants of whom Luke writes, "he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve (Mark 22:26b).

The modern challenge to both the anene and the ntungata is to be leaders of wisdom and virtue, not insecure church caretakers. Their tasks are draining, demanding, turbulent

and complex. They have to maintain a broad vision because each generation has bigger problems to face, especially in the twenty-first century with more conflicts and complexes to explain and interpret. The issues of the AIDS crisis, nuclear disaster threat, or ecological disaster--ought to be fully included in the vision of the Church.

Church leaders need to be flexible--that is, able to look into an event or issue from all dimensions. A leader is able to see how far he or she can be flexible without losing the vision of usalama. The leaders need to have core beliefs regarding the Church vision, flexible thinking towards the vision and elastic strategies for achieving the vision. There are those leaders who push even a good idea too far, too fast, and at the wrong time. Those who are overly responsive feel the frustration of the Church's inertia. Successful leaders are able to create and sustain a tension-filled balance between the two extremes. They are able to get things done, to know what they stand for and what they want. They think creatively about how to make things happen and to develop strategies to respond to the Church's needs.

The leaders' commitment to the vision should not be so inflexible as to threaten the vision. Sometimes ministers are so committed to spirituality that they are blind to many political and social issues. At other times, ministers may

be preoccupied with rationality and details, politics and social issues, that it is hard to marshal support for the Church vision and even to capture the spirit of God moving in the church. The leaders with a vision will have a multifaceted approach to the service of the church that they will become masters of ceremony and ritual, superb observers of human and environmental welfare, charming preachers and persuaders for the vision, solid administrators and spiritual leaders.

The usalama leaders are flexible enough to encourage flexibility in thought, action and the ability to play a necessary role in a situation without sacrificing the vision and values of the Church. Flexible thinking in action produces elastic strategies which can be shaped and reshaped to produce change. The elasticity encourages negotiations for shared values and goals, giving and taking which keeps the Church evolving and changing.

The vision of usalama is for congregations, deacons, elders, pastors and leaders who want to teach and practice the values of healthy community living in a healthy environment. The vision is for those who see the Church through the eyes of a peoples' God-given culture--in which the whole creation lives in harmony. The vision is for those that see negotiations as shaping and reshaping the community. The vision is for those who are committed to the

values of shalom, freedom, community, creation and flexibility in the Church.

Further Suggestions

Presbyterians for usalama should be established within PCEA to promote, encourage and enhance a biblical approach to a healthy community in a healthy environment. The community's brokenness might be caused by declining African family cohesiveness, poverty, unemployment, corruption and overpopulation. Therefore, it is suggested that usalama groups within congregations can study, pray, encourage and work together for the healing of persons and local communities.

The Church form a family life usalama structure in every congregation where nurturing lifestyles in families can be learned, discussed and strengthened. These structures may help in developing new friendships, promoting joyous and loving fidelity within marriage, and build loving homes where children are nurtured into wholeness. At a time when AIDS is a dreadful threat to the society, the Church ought to reach out in love and accountability to all hurting people and families.

The Church ought to assist institutions and local congregations to undertake a variety of educational activities that can make church life, work and mission spiritual, communal and ecological. The question to ask and

answer is: How can the church sermons, baptisms, marriages, holy communions, funerals and assemblies bring usalama to the their clients? Are the church rituals and ceremonies transformative enough to bring usalama to the communities that are poor, hurting and dependent on firewood for fuel, livestock for food, prostitution for earning a living and alcoholism as an escapist tool to alleviate their day to day pains and anguish?

The Church ought to work with seminaries, schools, colleges, universities, and hospitals and other institutions which are full of spiritual hunger, vigor and vitality. The Church may develop courses on usalama with a biblical base.

Finally, usalama really ought to be a development of communities of hope and care. Ethnic differences in the country make it difficult for some Christians to love and accept one another freely and happily. Usalama suggests united efforts in peacemaking, love, care and unity.

Usalama means a commitment to peace. In 1982, Pope John Paul declared:

Today, the scale and horror of modern warfare--whether nuclear or not--makes it totally unacceptable as a means of settling differences between nations. War should belong to the tragic past, to history; it should find no place on humanity's agenda for the future.¹²

¹² James O'Halloran, Living Cells: Developing Small Communities (New York: Orbis, 1988), 116.

War ruins the environment, as well as inter-personal and intercommunity relationships. Usalama seeks peace, fellowship and communion. This inter-connectedness presupposes diversity in everything, but a discipline of unity makes up the usalama communities of Kenya, Africa and the world.

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